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CORINNA;

OR

ITALY.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

R. Juigné, Printer,
17, Margaret-street, Cavendish-square.

CORINNA;

OR,

ITALY.

BY MAD. DE STAËL HOLSTEIN.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY D. LAWLER.

. Udralla il bel paese,
Ch' Apennin parte, e'l mar circonda, e l'Alpe.
PETRARCH.

VOL. V.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CORRI, NO. 15, LITTLE NEWPORT
STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE; AND SOLD
BY COLBURN, NO. 48, CONDUIT
STREET, NEW BOND STREET,
AND MACKENZIE, NO. 24,
OLD BAILEY.

1807.

CONTINUA

ITINERARY

BY MAJOR DE STALL HOLSTEIN

IN FIVE VOLUMES

THE ASSOCIATED BOOKSELLERS



Vol. I.

Printed by J. Neumann, Neudamm, 1807.

1807.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Neumann, No. 15, Little, Newmarket

Street, Little, Newmarket; and sold

at Cambridge, No. 43, Cornhill

Street, New Bond Street,

and Woburn, No. 24

Old Bailey

1807.

Mrs. Lisleton

BOOK XVII.

Corinna in Scotland.

CHAPTER I.

CORINNA all this time had taken up her
abode on the banks of the Brenta, near
Venice, wishing to linger near the spot
where she had seen Oswald
himself, and conceiving

friendship which subsisted between them, gave the Prince a claim upon her confidence, and should he endeavour to wean her from Oswald, by representing the probability that absence would diminish his affection for her, such an observation would be like the stroke of a dagger to her heart; she therefore chose to be quite alone. But this is not an easy task for an ardent soul in an unhappy situation. The occupations of solitude require that the mind should be perfectly calm, and w
tated by disquietude, it is better
some forced means of diverting it,
incompatible with its dispositions,
interrupt the continuity of th
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sion of objects. Besides, the unfortunate imagination of Corinna preyed upon itself, when without food from without.

How different was her present life to that which she had led for a twelvemonth past ! Then Oswald was with her every day ; he followed her wherever she went he greedily devoured all her words ; his reflections excited those of Corinna. Their conversation was equally animated by the opposition as by the analogy of their opinions, and Corinna incessantly enjoyed the felicity of beholding that look so tender, so sweet, and so constantly occupied with her. When disturbed by the least disquietude, Oswald took her hand, pressed it against his heart, and the calm, and more than the calm of a vague and delicious hope was revived in her soul. Now all was barren without, and all gloomy within ; her life was checquered with no other event, no other variety than Oswald's let-

ters; and the irregularity of the post in winter, made her feel all the torment of expectation, an expectation which was often disappointed. She walked every morning on the banks of the canal, whose waves sleep under the weight of large leaves, called water lilies. She awaited the black gondola which brought the letters from Venice; she was able, from force of habit, to distinguish it at a great distance, and her heart beat with dreadful violence as soon as she perceived it. Her messenger quitted the gondola — sometimes he said: “*There are no letters, Madam,*” and then continued quietly to go over the rest of his affairs, as if the circumstance of his bringing no letters was of trifling importance. Another time he would say to her: “*Yes, Madam, there are some.*” She sorted them with a trembling hand, and, perhaps, saw not among them the writing of Oswald; then the rest of the day was insupportible; the

night was passed without sleep, and on the morrow she experienced the same anxiety, which absorbed every hour of her time.

At length she accused Lord Nelville for the sufferings she felt; she thought he might write more often, and reproached him with his neglect. He justified himself, and already she perceived that the style of his letters was less tender; for instead of expressing his own uneasiness, he was only occupied in endeavouring to remove hers.

These shades of distinction did not escape the melancholy Corinna, who used to make a single word, a single phrase of Oswald's letters, a theme of study day and night, who used to read them over incessantly to find an answer to his fears—a new interpretation which might afford him some days of calm.

Her present feelings gave a shock to her nerves, and weakend her mind. She became superstitious, and was ever forming

those presages which may be drawn from every event, when continually pursued by the same fear. One day in the week she went to Venice in order, upon that day, to receive her letters a few hours sooner. She thus varied the torment of expectation. At the end of some weeks she conceived a horror at every thing that she saw in going and returning : they were the spectres of her former thoughts that now presented themselves to her eyes in horrible shapes.

Once, in entering the church of St. Mark, she recollected that on her arrival at Venice, the idea had suggested itself to her that, perhaps, before she quitted that city Lord Nelville would conduct her to this temple and make her his wife in the face of heaven : she then gave herself up entirely to this illusion. She saw him enter the church, approach the altar, and make a vow to God to love Corinna for

ever. She fancied herself kneeling before Oswald, and receiving from him the nuptial crown. The strains of the organ, and the light of the torches favoured her vision, and for a moment she no longer felt the cruel void of absence; but her soul was filled with tenderness and love. All on a sudden she heard a solemn murmur, and as she was returning, a coffin was brought into the church. At this sight, she staggered—her eyes failed her, and from that moment she was convinced, by imagination, that her passion for Oswald would be the cause of her death.

CHAP. II.

WHEN Oswald had read his father's letter, which he received from the hands of Mr. Dickson, he was for a long time the most irresolute, the most wretched of men. To rend the heart of Corinna, or be wanting in respect for the memory of his father, were such cruel alternatives, that he invoked death a thousand times to escape them ; at length he again had recourse to an expedient which he had so often practised before—he postponed the moment of decision, and said to himself, that he would go to Italy to render Corin-

na herself the judge of his sufferings, and the arbitress of his conduct. He conceived, that duty forbade his union with Corinna. He was not, however, bound to espouse Lucilia. But in what manner could he pass his life with the mistress of his affections? Was he to sacrifice his country to her; or to bring her to England, without regard either to her reputation or her condition? In this painful perplexity, he would have set out for Venice, if it had not been reported one month after another, that his regiment was going to embark; he would have gone to inform Corinna of that which he could not bring himself to commit to writing.

However, the tone of his letters was necessarily altered. He would not write what was passing in his soul; but he could no longer express himself with the same freedom. He had determined to conceal from Corinna the obstacles which he had

met with in his endeavours to get her acknowledged ; because he still hoped to effect it in time, and, therefore, did not wish to irritate her to no purpose against her mother-in-law. Various concealed modes of expression rendered his letters more short : he filled them with foreign subjects ; he said nothing about his future projects ; in effect, any other than Corinna would have been certain of what was passing in the heart of Oswald ; but a fond passion renders us at once more penetrating and more credulous. It seems that in such a situation we can see nothing but by a supernatural manner. We discover what is concealed ; but shut our eyes to what is clear ; for we are revolted at the idea of suffering to such a pitch, without anything extraordinary being the cause, and the thought that so much despair is produced by common circumstances.

Oswald was extremely wretched, both from his own situation, and the pain it must necessarily cause her whom he loved, and his letters expressed irritation of mind, without making known the cause. By a strange inconsistency, he reproached Corinna for the grief that he felt, as if she were not a thousand times more to be pitied than he ; thus he rendered her completely miserable. She was no longer mistress of herself : her mind was disturbed ; her night's were haunted by fatal visions, which day could not disperse. The unhappy Corinna could not believe that the Oswald, who wrote to her such unfeeling, such incoherent, and such bitter letters, was the same whom she had known so generous, and so tender ; and she felt an irresistible desire to see him again, and hear him speak. —“ Let me hear him tell me,” said she, “ that it is he who can thus pitilessly

pierce my heart; he who so lately was afflicted at the lightest uneasiness I suffered—let him tell me so himself, and I will submit to my fate. Surely an infernal power must inspire such language. It is not Oswald; no, it cannot be Oswald that writes thus to me. Somebody has injured me in his opinion; such calamity could never be brought upon me without some base perfidy.

One day, Corinna formed the resolution of going to Scotland; if that may be called a resolution, which is only the impetuosity of grief, which desires a change of situation at all events; she dared not inform any body of her intention; she could not determine even to tell it to Theresa, and she flattered herself, that the dictates of her own reason would ultimately induce her to stay without being dissuaded by her friends. She only wished to relieve her imagination by a thought different from that which prey-

ed on her, by substituting the possibility of future comfort, for the certainty of present anguish. She was incapable of any occupation. Reading was become impossible to her; music only caused her a painful thrilling, and the view of nature, which induces reverie, only added to her affliction. The torments of her soul no longer discovered themselves, save by the deadly pale of her countenance. She looked at her watch every moment to see if an hour had gone by, yet without knowing why she should desire the hour to change its number, since it brought to her nothing new—only a sleepless night followed by a day of sorrow.

One evening when she believed herself ready to depart, a woman asked to see her; understanding that she eagerly desired it, she ordered her to be shewn into her presence. She saw enter her room, a female quite deformed; her face disfigured by a dreadful malady, clad in black,

and covered with a veil, to conceal if possible her aspect from those whom she approached. This woman thus ill-treated by nature, took upon herself the office of collecting alms. She asked aid for the poor in the most noble and affecting terms ; and Corinna gave her a considerable sum of money, only making her promise to pray for her. The poor woman who was resigned to her fate, beheld with astonishment this beautiful person, in the bloom of youth, rich, and generally admired, thus weighed down by misfortune. —“Heavens, Madam!” said she to her, “I would you were as tranquil as me.” — What a speech, addressed by such a woman, in such a situation, to the most celebrated female in Italy, succumbing under a load of despair !

Alas ! the power of love is too great for ardent souls ! How happy are they who consecrate to God alone this sentiment, of which the inhabitants of the earth are not

worthy ! But the time for that was not yet come for Corinna ; she still sought illusion ; she still pursued the phantom of happiness ; she prayed, but she had not yet learned resignation. Her rare talents, and the glory which she had acquired, still inspired her with too much terrestrial interest. It is only by detaching ourselves from every thing in this world that we can renounce what we love ; every other sacrifice precedes that, and life may long be a desert without the fire being extinguished that laid it waste.

At last in the midst of these doubts and conflicts, which incessantly reversed and renewed the plan of Corinna, she received a letter from Oswald, which informed her that his regiment was to embark in six weeks, and that he could not profit by that time to repair to Venice ; as a Colonel, who should absent himself in such a moment would lose his reputation.— Corinna had barely time to get to England

before Lord Nelville was to quit Europe, perhaps for ever. This fear ultimately determined her to go. Corinna is entitled to pity, though she was not ignorant how inconsiderate was the step she was taking; she judged herself more severely than any body else: but what woman has a right to *cast the first stone* at the unfortunate who does not seek to justify her fault, who expects to derive no pleasure from it, but flies from one misfortune to another, as if she were every where pursued by fearful phantoms?

These were the last lines of her letter to the Prince Castel-Forte: “ Adieu, my protector! Adieu my Roman friends! Adieu, all you with whom I have passed so many days of ease and pleasure! The sword of fate has pierced me—I feel its mortal wound within my breast—I still struggle; but I shall inevitably fall! I must see him again—believe me I am not respon-

sible for my own conduct—there is a storm raging in my soul which I cannot govern. However, I approach the term when all for me will be at an end; what passes now is the last stage of my history, which will be succeeded by penitence and death. Strange confusion in the human heart! Even at this moment when impelled by all the vehemence of passion, I still perceive at a distance the shadows of decline, and I think I hear a divine voice, which says, to me, “Unfortunate Corinna, some few days longer of perturbation and of love, and thou shalt join me in eternal repose.” O my God! Let me see Oswald again!—Let me see him for the last time! The recollection of his features is obscured by my despair; but was there not something divine in his looks? Did he not appear grand when he entered, when a more pure and brilliant air announced his approach? You have seen him, my friend, place him-

self near me, surround me with his attentions, and protect me by the respect which he inspired for the object of his choice. Ah! how is it possible to exist without him? Pardon my ingratitude.—Is it thus I ought to acknowledge the constant and noble affection which you have ever shewn me? But I am now lost to all my friends—I am unworthy of their friendship, and should pass for a maniac if I did not possess the sad faculty of observing upon my own madness. Farewell then, Farewell!”

CHAP. III.

How unhappy is the delicate and sensible woman who commits a great imprudence, who commits it for one by whom she believes herself less beloved, and is without any support but herself. Did she hazard her reputation and her repose to render a great service to him whom she loves, she would not be an object of compassion. It is so sweet to offer ourselves a sacrifice in such a cause ; the soul feels so much delight in braving every peril to save a life that is dear to us, to assuage the grief which rends a heart allied to our own.

But thus to traverse countries alone, in order to arrive where we are not expected, to blush at meeting him we love even for the proof of affection which we are giving him ; to risk all because we choose it, not because another requires it of us ; what a painful sentiment ! What humiliation, worthy however of pity ! What would it be if we thus compromised the existence of others, if we were wanting in our duty towards sacred ties ? But Corinna was free ; she only sacrificed her glory and her repose. There was neither reason nor prudence in her conduct, but it was not injurious to another—her fatal love only ruined herself.

On landing in England, Corinna learnt from the public papers that the departure of Lord Nelville's regiment was retarded some time longer. She saw no company in London but that of the banker to whom she had been recommended, under

a borrowed name. He was very much interested by her, and was eager, as well as his wife, and daughter, to render her every service imaginable. She fell dangerously ill on her arrival, and, during a fortnight her new friends attended her with the greatest care and tenderness. She learnt that Lord Nelville was in Scotland, but that he would return to London, where his regiment actually was, in a few days. She knew not how to resolve upon informing him that she was in England. She had never announced to him her intention of quitting Italy; and such was her embarrassment on this point, that for a month she had never written to Oswald. He began to feel greatly uneasy at this, and accused her of inconstancy, as if he had any right to complain on that subject. On his arrival in London he went directly to his banker's, where he hoped to find letters from Italy, but was told there was none. He left the banker's

and as he was forming the most painful reflections on this silence, he met Mr. Edgermond, whom he had seen at Rome, and who enquired after Corinna.—“ I can give you no account of her,” answered Lord Nelville pettishly.—“ Oh ! I believe you readily,” answered Mr. Edgermond, “ these Italian ladies soon forget foreigners, when they are out of sight. You must not let that concern you too deeply—there are a thousand examples of it ; indeed they would be too fascinating did they unite constancy to all their shining qualities. They should leave some advantages to our women.”—He squeezed his hand as he spoke thus, and took leave of him to return to Wales, his customary retreat ; but the few words he had uttered had penetrated the heart of Oswald with sadness.—“ I am unjust,” said he to himself, “ to wish that she should regret me, since I am unable to devote myself to her

happiness. But to forget, so soon, him whom she loved, withers up the past as well as the future."—

The moment Lord Nelville had learnt his father's will, he determined not to espouse Corinna; but he also formed the design of not seeing Lucilia again. He was dissatisfied with the too lively impression she had produced on him, and said to himself, that being condemned to render unhappy the mistress of his soul, he ought at least to endeavour in mitigation of her sufferings, to preserve inviolably, that fidelity for her which no duty commanded him to sacrifice. He contented himself with writing to Lady Edgermond, to renew his solicitations relative to Corinna; but she constantly refused to return any answer on that subject, and his Lordship learnt from his conversation with Mr. Dickson, the friend of Lady Edgermond, that the only way to

obtain of her what he requested, was by espousing her daughter ; for she conceived that Corinna might injure the establishment of her sister, if she were to resume her real name, and be acknowledged by her family. Corinna did not yet suspect the interest that Lucilia had awakened in Lord Nelville. Fate had hitherto spared her that pang. Never, however, was she more worthy of Lord Nelville than at the moment when destiny separated her from him. She had, during her illness, in the midst of the simple and honest merchants, with whom she lived, acquired a true taste for English manners and customs. The small number of females whom she had seen in the banker's family were by no means of brilliant intellectual parts ; but they possessed a remarkable strength of reason, and correctness of thinking. The affection they shewed her was less expansive than that she had been accustomed to ;

but it was manifested upon every occasion by new services. The severity of Lady Edgermond, and the irksomeness of a little provincial town, had cruelly deceived her as to all that is noble and good in the country which she had renounced, and to which she had now become attached, under circumstances, when it were to be wished, for her own happiness at least, that she had continued in her former sentiments.

CHAP. II.

ONE evening, the family who loaded Corinna with marks of friendship and interest, pressed her warmly to go to Drury-Lane Theatre, to see Mrs. Siddons in *Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage*; one of the pieces in which this actress displays the most astonishing powers. Corinna refused for some time; but recollecting that Lord Nelville had often compared her mode of declamation to that of Mrs. Siddons, she had a curiosity to see her. She, therefore, went to the theatre veiled, and chose a little box where she could see

every thing without being seen herself. She knew not that Lord Nelville was arrived in London the day before ; but she feared she might be perceived by some Englishman who had known her in Italy. The noble figure, and profound sensibility of the actress, so captivated the attention of Corinna, that, during the first acts, her eyes were never turned from the stage. The English declamation is more proper than any other to stir up the soul, when a fine talent makes its force and originality felt. It has less art, less appearance of study than the French ; the impression which it produces is more immediate—real despair should thus be expressed—and the nature of the pieces, and of the style of versification, placing the dramatic art at less distance from real life, the effect which it produces is more moving. It requires so much the more genius to be a great actor in France, as there is very little

liberty allowed for individual manner ; so much space is occupied by general rules. (8) But in England, we may risk every thing if nature inspires. Those long groans, which appear ridiculous when related, thrill with horror when they are heard. Mrs. Siddons, an actress, the most noble in her manners, loses nothing of her dignity when she throws herself on the ground. There is nothing which may not be admirable when it is caused by an intimate emotion ; an emotion proceeding from the centre of the soul, and governing him who feels, more than him who witnesses it. Different nations have a different manner of playing tragedy ; but the expression of woe is understood from one end of the world to the other ; and from the savage to the king there is something similar in all mankind when they are truly wretched.

In the interval between the fourth and

fifth acts, Corinna remarked that every eye was turned towards a particular box, and in this box she saw Lady Edgermond and her daughter; for she doubted not that it was Lucilia; though in the course of seven years she had become greatly improved. The death of a very rich relation of her late Lord, had obliged Lady Edgermond to come to London, in order to regulate the necessary business of succession. Lucilia, upon this occasion had adorned herself more than usual; and for a long a time, in England, so celebrated for its fair, such an extraordinary beauty, had not been seen. Corinna was painfully surprised on beholding her; for it appeared impossible that Oswald could resist the attractions of such a divine creature. She compared herself in thought with Lucilia, and so much did she exaggerate, if it were possible to exaggerate the vernal charms of her innocent rival, that she felt humi-

liated by the contrast of her own acquired, or at least matured talents, with those graces lavished on her sister by nature alone.

On a sudden, she perceived Lord Nelville in the opposite box, whose eyes were fixed on Lucilia. What a moment for Corinna; she beheld again, for the first time, those features which had made such an impression on her, which she sought to recal every instant, though they were never effaced from her memory; she beheld them again at the moment when they were engaged in admiring Lucilia; undoubtedly he was unconscious of the presence of Corinna; but if his eyes had been directed by chance towards her, the unfortunate would have drawn from it some omen of happiness. At length Mrs. Siddons appeared, and Lord Nelville turned his eyes upon the stage. Corinna then breathed more freely, and flattered herself that

Oswald's attention to Lucilia was simply an effect of transient curiosity. The piece became every moment more affecting, and Lucilia was bathed in tears, which she sought to conceal by retiring to the farther end of the box. Oswald then contemplated her afresh, with much more interest than at first. At length arrived that terrible moment when Isabella having escaped the hands of her women, who wish to prevent her killing herself, smiles, while she plunges the dagger in her bosom, at the inutility of their efforts. This smile of despair is the most difficult and remarkable effect that the dramatic art can produce ; it is more moving than tears: this bitter irony of woe is its most heart-rending expression. How terrible is the suffering soul, when it inspires so barbarous a joy, when it excites against our own blood the ferocious satisfaction of a

savage enemy who has effected his vengeance.

At this moment, undoubtedly, Lucilia was so much affected that her mother was alarmed at it; for she was seen to turn towards her with disquietude, Oswald arose as if he would have flown to her assistance; but soon resumed his seat. Corinna felt some joy at this second movement; but she said to herself, with a sigh: "My sister, Lucilia, who was once so dear to me, is young and sensible; why should I wish to ravish from her a blessing which she might enjoy without any obstacle, without any sacrifice on the part of him whom she loves?"

The piece being over, Corinna wished to let the audience all go out before her, for fear of being recognized, and she placed herself behind the little aperture in her box, from which she could perceive all that

passed in the lobby. The moment Lucilia came out all the crowd gathered round her, and nothing was heard but exclamations on the beauty of her figure; Lucilia became more and more embarrassed. The infirm Lady Edgermond could hardly make her way through the throng, notwithstanding the attentions of her daughter; but they knew nobody, and consequently no gentleman presumed to accost them. Lord Nelville beheld their embarrassment, and hastened to their aid. He offered one arm to Lady Edgermond, and the other to Lucilia, who timidly accepted it, blushing excessively. Oswald did not imagine that poor Corinna was witness to so painful a spectacle; for he felt a proud sensation in thus conducting the most beautiful woman in England through the numberless admirers that followed her steps.

CHAP. V.

CORINNA returned home cruelly agitated, not knowing what resolution she should take, how she should make known to Lord Nelville her arrival, and what she should assign as its motive ; for she every moment lost her confidence in the passion he once felt for her ; and it sometimes appeared to her as if she were about to visit a stranger, whom she passionately loved, but who would no longer look upon her. She sent the evening after to Lord Nelville's, and was informed that he was at Lady Edgermond's ; on the following day the same answer was brought ; but she was told also,

that Lady Edgermond was ill, and that she would set out for her estate as soon as she was recovered. Corinna awaited this moment to inform Lord Nelville that she was in England; but every evening she went out, passed before the house of Lady Edgermond, and saw Oswald's carriage at the door. Her heart was chilled at the sight, and, returning home, she took the same walk, on the morrow, to experience the same pain. Corinna, however, was in the wrong to suppose that Oswald visited Lady Edgermond with the intention of espousing her daughter.

On the night of the play, Lady Edgermond had informed Oswald, as he conducted her to her carriage, that the succession of Lord Edgermond's relation, who had died in India, concerned Corinna as much as her own daughter, and she besought him, in consequence, to call upon her, to charge himself with transmitting to

Italy the different arrangements which she wished to make in this respect. Oswald promised to comply with her request, and he thought that, at that moment, the hand of Lucilia, which he held, trembled. The silence of Corinna might induce him to believe that he was no longer beloved by her, and the emotion of this young maid must have given an idea that he had awakened an interest at the bottom of her heart. However, he had not an idea of failing in the promise which he had given Corinna, and the ring which she possessed, was a certain pledge that he would not espouse another without her consent. He went to Lady Edgermond's the next day on Corinna's business ; but Lady Edgermond was so ill, and her daughter so uneasy at finding herself alone in London, with no relation there (Mr. Edgermond not being in town), without even knowing what physician to apply to, that Oswald

thought it a duty he owed the friend of his father, to devote his whole time to her.

Lady Edgermond, naturally proud and harsh, seemed to soften with Oswald: she admitted him every day, though he did not say a word that bespoke an intention of espousing her daughter. The name and beauty of Lucilia had been so spoken of since she was seen at the play, that her door was besieged by the visits of the greatest noblemen in the country. Lady Edgermond constantly refused to receive any body: she never went out, and would only accept the visits of Lord Nelville. How must he not have been flattered with conduct so delicate! This silent generosity, which left all to himself, without any complaint, without any condition, sensibly affected him; yet, every time he entered Lady Edgermond's house, he feared lest his presence should be considered as an engagement. He

would have ceased to go thither when the concerns of Corinna no longer required it of him, if Lady Edgermond had recovered her health. But at the moment when thought better, she relapsed again, more dangerously than at first, and had she now died, Lucilia would have had, in London, no protector but Oswald, since her mother formed no acquaintances.

Lucilia had not indulged herself in a single word which might induce Lord Nelville to believe that she was partial to him; but he had reason to suppose it, in some instances, from a slight and sudden alteration of her colour, from her eyes being too suddenly cast down, and from the increased rapidity of her respiration; in effect, he studied the heart of this young maiden with a curious and tender interest, and her complete reserve left him always in doubt and uncertainty as to the nature of her sentiments. The highest

pitch of passion and the eloquence which it inspires, does not suffice the imagination; we always desire something more, and not being able to obtain it, we cool, we grow tired, and the feeble light, which we perceive through clouds, keeps the curiosity a long time in suspense, and seems to promise, in futurity, new sentiments, and new discoveries. This expectation, however, is not satisfied, and when, at last, we know what all this charm of silence and ignorance conceals, the mystery also withers; and we return from it to regret the freedom and the emotion of an animated disposition. Alas! in what manner can we prolong that enchantment of the heart, those delights of the soul, which confidence and doubt, happiness and misfortune equally dissipate in the end, so much are celestial enjoyments foreign to our destiny! They sometimes cross our mind;

but only to tell us of our origin, and our future hope.

Lady Edgermond finding herself better, fixed her departure for two days after, to go to Scotland, where she wished to visit the estate of Lord Edgermond, which was adjoining that of Lord Nelville. She expected that he would propose to accompany her, since he had announced his intention of returning to Scotland before he joined his regiment; but he was silent. Lucilia's eye was anxiously fixed upon him at this moment, but she said nothing. She arose precipitately, and went to the window. A few moments after, Lord Nelville made a pretext to approach her, when he perceived that her eyes were moist with tears; he was moved at this discovery, and the forgetfulness of his mistress recurring to his memory, he asked himself, whether this young maiden

might not be more capable of a faithful passion than Corinna?

Oswald sought to atone for the pain he had just caused Lucilia. We feel so much pleasure in restoring joy to a countenance still infantine! Grief is not made for a physiognomy where even reflection has not left a trace. The regiment of Lord Nelville was to be reviewed the next morning in Hyde Park; he therefore asked Lady Edgermond to accompany her daughter thither in an open chaise, and begged to know whether he would be allowed, after the review, to take an excursion, with Lucilia on horseback by the side of her mother's carriage. Lucilia had once expressed a great desire to ride on horseback. She looked at her mother with an expression, still submissive as ever, but in which might be remarked, nevertheless, a desire to obtain her consent. Lady Edgermond reflected for some moments, then

stretching to Nelville her feeble hand, which was every day decaying more and more, she said to him :—" If you ask it my Lord, I consent." These words made such an impression on Oswald, that he was about to retract his proposition ; but, on a sudden, Lucilia, with a vivacity she had never shewn before, took the hand of her mother and kissed it, in order to thank her. Lord Nelville could not then find the heart to deprive this innocent creature, who led so dull and solitary a life, of an amusement she seemed to anticipate with pleasure.

CHAP. VI.

DURING a fortnight Corinna felt the most cruel anxiety ; every morning she hesitated whether she should write to Lord Nelville, informing him where she was, and every evening was spent in grief unutterable, from knowing that he was with Lucilia. What she suffered at night rendered her more timid on the morrow. She was ashamed to inform him, who, perhaps, no longer loved her, of the inconsiderate steps she had taken on his account—“ Perhaps,” she would often say to herself, “ every recollection of Italy is effaced

from his memory ! Perhaps he no longer seeks in woman a superior mind, and a passionate heart ! What delights him now, is the admirable beauty, and the angelical expression of seventeen, and the timid new-born soul which consecrates to him the first emotions it has ever felt."

The imagination of Corinna was so struck with the advantages of her sister, that she was almost ashamed to put herself in competition with such charms: compared with her unarmed innocence, talent she thought a stratagem, wit, a tyranny, a passion, a violent force, and although not yet twenty-eight years of age, she anticipated the feelings of that epoch, when women so painfully mistrust their power of pleasing. Jealousy struggled in her soul with a proud timidity, and she put off from day-to-day the moment so much dreaded, yet so much desired, when she should see Oswald again. She learned that

his regiment was to be reviewed on the morrow in Hyde Park, and determined to be present. She thought it possible that Lucilia might be there, and determined to judge with her own eyes of the sentiments of Oswald. At first she determined to adorn herself with care, and break upon him suddenly ; but in beginning her toilet, her black hair, her complexion, which the sun of Italy had tinged with brown, and her strongly-marked features, whose expression she could not judge of herself, made her despair of her charms. She fancied she saw in her mirror, the Seraphic countenance of her sister, and casting aside all her ornaments, she dressed herself in a black Venetian gown, covered her face and shape with the mantle which is worn in that country, and thus disguised threw herself into a carriage.

Hardly had she reached Hyde Park

when she saw Oswald enter it at the head of his regiment. He appeared in his uniform the finest, and most majestic figure in the world, and he managed his horse with the most perfect grace and dexterity. There was something in the martial music, bold and sweet, which seemed to stimulate to a noble sacrifice of life. A multitude of men, elegantly and simply clad, and of beautiful and modest women, bore in their countenances, some the stamp of manly, and others of the timid virtues. The soldiers of Oswald's regiment seemed to regard him with confidence and devotion. The famous air of "*God save the King*;" was played, which produces such a lively impression on every English heart. Corinna cried; "Oh! envied land," which ought to be my native country, why did I leave thee? What would be the sacrifice of personal fame, in

the midst of so many virtues, and what glory could equal that, O Nelville, of being thy worthy spouse !”

The military instruments which were heard, reminded Corinna of the danger Oswald was about to run. She looked at him a long time without his being able to see her, and said, her eyes suffused with tears :—“ Oh ! gracious God, prolong his days ! Let him live though it should not be for me !”—At this moment the carriage of Lady Edgermond arrived, and Lord Nelville saluted her respectfully, in kissing the point of his sword. This carriage passed and repassed several times. Every eye followed Lucilia in admiration ; Oswald beheld her with looks that pierced the heart of Corinna. The unfortunate well knew these looks—she had felt their power.

The horses which Lord Nelville had lent to Lucilia, traversed Hyde Park with

amazing swiftness, whilst the carriage of Corinna advanced slowly, like a funeral convoy, behind the rapid coursers, and their tumultuous noise.—“Ah! it was not thus,” thought she “no, it was not thus, that I advanced to the Capitol the first time he saw me—he has pulled me from the car of triumph: I love him, and all the joys of life have disappeared; I love him, and all the gifts of nature are faded! Pardon him, O God, when I shall be no more!”—Oswald passed on horse-back the carriage that contained Corinna. The Italian fashion of the sable garb in which she was dressed excited his curiosity. He stopped, and made a circuit round the carriage to behold her again, and tried to discover who it was, so concealed from observation. The heart of Corinna beat violently all this time, and her only fear was that she would faint, and so discover herself, but she conquered her emotion, as

did Lord Nelville very soon his curiosity. When the review was over, Corinna, not to attract any farther the attention of Oswald, descended from her chaise, and mingled with the crowd. Oswald then approached Lady Edgermond's carriage, and shewing her a very gentle horse, which his servants had brought, he asked permission for Lucilia to mount it. Her mother consented, recommending to his care the lovely charge. Lord Nelville had alighted from his horse, and spoke to her Ladyship with his hat in his hand, with such an air of respect, that Corinna saw too well a regard for the mother inspired by the attractions of the daughter.

Lucilia quitted the chaise. She had on a riding habit, admirably fitted to the elegance of her shape, and wore a black hat with white feathers, whilst her fine flaxen tresses, light as air, gracefully adorned her charming countenance. Os-

wald placed his hand to receive the foot of Lucilia, and assist her to mount. Lucilia expected one of the servants to perform this office. She blushed to receive it from his Lordship. He insisted on it, and Lucilia, at length, placed her elegant foot on his hand, and darted so nimbly on horseback, that all her motions gave the idea of one of those sylphids, which imagination paints to us in such delicate colours. She set off in a gallop. Oswald followed, and never let her quit his sight. Once the horse made a stumble; Lord Nelville stopped it directly, and examined the bridle and the bit with an amiable anxiety. Another time he believed, though his fears were unfounded, that the horse had run away with her—he became pale as death, and spurring his own steed with incredible ardour, he reached Lucilia in a second, and alighting, precipitated himself before her. Lucilia, no longer able to

keep in her horse, trembled in her turn for Oswald; but with one hand he seized her bridle, and with the other arm gently caught Lucilia, who vaulted from her saddle.

What more was wanting to convince Corinna of Oswald's passion for Lucilia? Did she not witness all these marks of interest which he had formerly lavished on her? And even, to her eternal despair, did she not believe that the looks of Nelville betrayed more timidity, more reserve than he had ever shewn her, at the time that he most loved her? Twice she took the ring off her finger, and was ready to force her way through the crowd, in order to throw herself at the feet of Oswald; whilst the hope of dying on the spot, encouraged her in this resolution. But where is the woman who, even born beneath a southern sky, does not tremble to draw upon her the notice of a multitude. Soon

Corinna shuddered at the thought of shewing herself to Lord Nelville at that moment, and quitted the throng to reach her carriage. As she was traversing a solitary walk, Oswald saw at a distance, the same black figure which had struck him before, and the impression it now produced was much more lively. However, he attributed the emotion it caused him, to his having been that day, for the first time, really unfaithful to Corinna; and on his return home, he instantly took the resolution to set out again for Scotland, since his regiment was not to embark yet for some time.

CHAP. VII.

CORINNA returned home in a state of affliction which troubled her reason, and her health was for ever undermined from that moment. — She determined to write to Nelville an account of her arrival in England and all she had suffered since. She first began this letter with the most bitter reproaches, then she tore it.—“Of what service are upbraidings in love,” said she, “would this sentiment be the most intimate, the most pure, and the most generous of the human soul, if it were not perfectly involuntary? What would my

complaints effect? Another voice, another look than mine, possess the secret of his soul.”—She began her letter over again, and this time she designed to paint to Lord Nelville the monotony he would find in an union with Lucilia. She essayed to prove to him, that without a perfect harmony of mind and soul no happiness in love could be durable; but she tore this letter with more warmth than the first—“If he does not know my value,” said she, “is it I who will teach it him? Besides, ought I to speak thus of my sister? Is it true either that she is so inferior as I would persuade myself? And even were she so, is it I who in her infancy have pressed her to my heart like a mother, that ought to publish it? Ah! no, I cannot thus seek my own happiness at the expence of her’s. This life, so agitated by various desires, passes away, and long even before death something

pensive and sweet detaches us by degrees from existence."

She resumed her pen, and spoke of nothing but her own unhappiness; but in expressing it, she felt such pity for herself that the paper was covered with her tears!—"No," said she again, "I will not send him this letter; if he resist it, I shall hate him; and should he yield to it, I shall not know whether he is not making a sacrifice to me, while his heart is the property of another. It is better to see him, speak to him, and return him this ring, the pledge of his promises; she therefore enclosed the ring in a letter which contained only these words:—"*You are free!*"—And putting this epistle in her bosom, she waited till the approach of evening to visit Oswald.—Though she blushed at making this visit by day light, she thought it necessary to

go before the hour when he usually visited Lady Edgermond. At six o'clock, then, she set out, trembling like a condemned wretch ; so much do we dread the object of our love, when our confidence is lost ! Alas ! the man we tenderly love, must be in our eyes either the kindest protector, or the most formidable tyrant.

Corinna caused her carriage to stop before Lord Nelville's house, and asked with a trembling voice of the servant who opened the door, whether his Lordship was at home. "*My Lord set out for Scotland, half an hour ago, Madam,*" replied he. This news chilled the heart of Corinna. She trembled at the thought of seeing Oswald ; but her soul conquered her emotion. The effort was made, she believed herself on the point of hearing his voice, and now it was necessary to adopt a new resolution in order to obtain

an interview, to wait some days longer, and degrade herself a step lower. However, Corinna was determined to see Oswald, and the next day she set off for Edinburgh.

CHAP. VIII.

BEFORE quitting London, Lord Nelville had returned to his banker, and when he learnt that no letter from Corinna had arrived, he asked himself bitterly, whether he ought to sacrifice a domestic felicity sure and permanent, to one who, perhaps, no longer thought of him. However, he resolved to write once more to Italy, as he had done several times for the last six weeks, to demand of Corinna the cause of her silence, and declare to her again, that as long as she detained the ring, he never would become the hus-

band of another. He performed his voyage in a very painful state of mind: he loved Lucilia, almost without knowing it, for he had never heard her pronounce twenty words; but he regretted Corinna, and was afflicted at the circumstances that separated them; he was captivated by turns with the timid charm of the one, and the grace, brilliancy, and eloquence of the other. If, at this moment, he had known that Corinna, loved him more than ever, that she had given up every thing to follow him, he would never have beheld Lucilia again; but he believed himself forgotten, and comparing the character of Corinna with that of her sister, he said to himself that a cold and reserved exterior often concealed the most profound sentiments; but he was deceived. Passionate minds betray themselves in a thousand ways, and that which can be contained is always very weak.

One circumstance happened to augment the interest with which Lucilia inspired Lord Nelville. On returning to his estate he passed so near that of Lady Edgermond that curiosity attracted him thither. He visited the cabinet where Lucilia used to work. This cabinet was filled with *souvenirs* of the time that Oswald's father had passed with Lucilia whilst his son was in France. She had erected a marble pedestal on the very spot where, a few months before his death, he had given her lessons, and on this pedestal was engraven: "*To the Memory of my second Father.*" A book was lying on the table, which Oswald opened, and knew to be the collection of his father's thoughts. On the first page he found these words, written with his own hand: "*To her who has consoled me in my sufferings, to the angelic female, whose purity of soul will be the glory and happiness of her hus-*

band." With what emotion did Oswald read these lines, in which the opinion of him whom he revered was so warmly expressed ! He was astonished at Lucilia's silence toward him on the testimonials of affection, which she had received from his father. He thought this silence evinced the most extraordinary delicacy—the fear of forcing his choice by a sense of duty. How was he struck with these words: "*To her who has consoled me in my sufferings !*" It is Lucilia then," said he, "who assuaged the pain I caused my father, and shall I abandon her now, when her mother is dying ? When she will have none but me to console her ? Ah Corinna, so brilliant and so accomplished, have you need, like Lucilia, of a faithful and devoted friend ?"—Alas ! she was no longer brilliant, no longer accomplished ; but a female wandering from inn to inn, slighted by him for whom she had abandoned all, and un-

able to form the resolution to tear herself from him. She had fallen ill at a little town about half way to Edinburgh, and had not been able, in spite of her efforts, to continue her journey. She often thought during her long nights of suffering, that if she were to die in this spot, only Theresa would know her name, and get it inscribed on her tomb-stone. What a change in the condition of a woman, whose every step in Italy was strewed with laurels! Ought one sentiment thus to strip life of its all? At length, after after eight days of inexpressible anguish, she resumed her sad journey; for though the hope of seeing Oswald was the object of it, there were so many painful sentiments confounded with this lively hope, that her heart was racked with the most grievous disquietude. Before she arrived at Lord Nelville's abode, Corinna felt a desire to stop at her father's estate, which was not

far distant, where Lord Edgermond had desired his tomb to be erected. She had never been there since that time, and had only passed one month in that part with her father. It was the most happy epoch of her abode in England. These recollections excited in her a desire to behold once more this spot which contained the ashes of her father. She little thought that Lady Edgermond was there before her!

At some miles from the castle, Corinna perceived a coach overturned on the road. She ordered her own carriage to stop, and saw come out of that which was broken down, an old gentleman, very much frightened at his fall. Corinna hastened to his succour, and offered to take him with her to the neighbouring town. He accepted her offer with gratitude, and told her that his name was Dickson. Corinna recollected having heard the name frequently

mentioned by Lord Nelville, and she contrived to turn the conversation of this good old man upon the only subject in which now she felt any interest. No man in the world was so ready to converse as Mr. Dickson, and not suspecting that Corinna, whose name he did not know, and whom he took for an English Lady, was at all interested in the question she put, he set about telling her all that he knew concerning them with the greatest minuteness, happy that his conversation was amusing to a female who had won him by her attention.

He related how he had informed Lord Nelville himself, that his father had before his death determined against the marriage which he now wished to contract, and gave an extract from his letter which he had remitted to Oswald, repeating several times these words, which pierced the heart of Corinna : “ *His father has forbidden*

him to espouse this Italian ; and it would be an insult to his memory to oppose his will."

Mr. Dickson did not confine himself to these cruel words : he moreover affirmed that Oswald loved Lucilia, and that Lucilia loved him ; that Lady Édgermond was strongly desirous of their marriage ; but that an engagement which he had formed in Italy, prevented Lord Nelville from consenting to it.—“ What,” said Corinna to Mr. Dickson, endeavouring to contain herself, “ do you believe that it is only on account of the engagement he has contracted in Italy, that Lord Nelville does not marry Miss Edgermond ?” —“ I am sure of it,” answered Mr. Dickson, charmed with being interrogated afresh, “ it is only three days ago since I saw his Lordship, and though he did not explain the nature of those ties, which he had contracted in Italy, he said,— these were

his words, which I repeated to Lady Edgermond—" *If I were free, I would espouse Lucilia,*"—" If he were free!" echoed Corinna!—and at that moment her carriage stopped at the inn where she was to put down Mr. Dickson. He wished to thank her, and ask where he might have the honor of seeing her again. Corinna no longer heard anything that he said. She squeezed his hand, and quitted him without having uttered a single word. It was late, yet she wished to visit that night the tomb of her father. The disorder of her mind gave a soothing charm to this sacred pilgrimage.

CHAP. IX.

LADY Edgermond had been two days at her estate, and this evening she gave a ball. All her neighbours, all her vassals had begged to join in celebrating her arrival; Lucilia also desired it, perhaps in the hope that Oswald would make one of the party; in effect, he was there when Corinna arrived. She saw a great number of carriages in the avenue, and stopped her own at some distance; she alighted, and recollected that retreat where her father had shewn her the most tender affection. How different were these times, which she be-

lieved unhappy from her present situation! It is thus that we are punished in life for the pains of the imagination by real grief, which teaches us but too well to know real misfortune.

Corinna enquired why the castle was illuminated, and who it was that was now there. The servant whom Corinna interrogated, happened to be one of those whom Lord Nelville had taken into his service in England: "It is a ball," said he, "that Lady Edgermond has given, and it was opened by Lord Nelville, my master, with Lucilia Edgermond the heiress of the castle." Corinna shuddered in hearing these words, but they did not alter her resolution. A bitter curiosity dragged her on towards this spot, where so much pain threatened her; she made a sign to her servants to retire, and entered the park, which was open, alone, and where, at this hour, the darkness allowed

her to walk a long time without being seen. It was ten o'clock ; and ever since the ball had opened Oswald had danced country-dances with Lucilia for his partner. These English dances are begun five or six times in an evening, and frequently the greatest gravity reigns throughout the scene.

Lucilia danced with dignity ; but without vivacity. Even the sentiment that governed her heart added to her natural seriousness : as the people of this canton were curious to know whether she loved Lord Nelville, every body beheld her with more than ordinary attention, which prevented her from lifting her eyes to Oswald, and such was her timidity that she neither saw nor heard any thing. Her trouble and reserve greatly affected Lord Nelville at first ; but as this situation did not vary, he began to feel a little *ennuyé*, and compared these long ranks of men and women,

and this monotonous music, with the grace and animation of the Italian airs and dances. This reflection threw him into a profound reverie, and Corinna would have tasted some moments of happiness had she known what were then the sentiments of Lord Nelville. But the unfortunate traversed at random the dark walks of an abode which she might formerly have considered as her own, a stranger now on her paternal soil, isolated in the presence of him whom she once considered as her future spouse. The earth seemed to sink beneath her feet, and her internal agitation supplied the place of strength ; perhaps she thought she should meet Oswald ; but in fact she knew not herself what she desired.

The castle was situated on an eminence at the foot of which flowed a river. One side of the river was very woody ; the other presented nothing to the view but

dry rocks covered with heath. Corinna wandered to the banks of this river; she heard at once the music of the festival, and the mumuring of the waters. The lamps of the ball were reflected from above in the midst of the river, whilst the desert country on the opposite shore, was only illuminated by the pale lustre of the moon. One would say that here, as in the tragedy of Hamlet, spectres wandered about the palace of revelry.

The unfortunate Corinna, alone and abandonned, had only one step to take to plunge herself in eternal oblivion.—“ Ah! cried she, “ if to-morrow, when he shall walk on the banks of this river with the joyous band of his friends, his triumphant steps were to encounter the remains of her whom once he loved, would he not feel an emotion that would avenge me—an agony resembling that I now suffer? But alas!” continued she, “ It is not vengeance that

we ought to seek in death, but repose. She was silent and contemplated anew that river whose waves rolled onward so fast, and yet so regularly—the work of nature, so orderly and harmonious, when the human soul is in wild tumult—she recollected the day when Lord Nelville plunged into the sea to save an old man.—“How good he was then,” cried Corinna, “but, alas,” added she, in weeping, “perhaps he is so still! Why should I blame him because I suffer? Perhaps he does not know it; perhaps, were he to see me.”—On a sudden, she formed the resolution of going directly, in the midst of the gala, demanding to see Lord Nelville and speaking to him. She ascended towards the castle with that kind of emotion which a determination newly taken excites, a determination which succeeds long uncertainty; but in approaching it she was seized with such a tremor as to be

obliged to sit down on a stone seat which was before the windows. The crowd of peasants assembled to behold the dancing, prevented her from being observed.

Lord Nelville at this moment came out on the balcony, to breathe the cool air of the evening; some rose trees that grew near there, brought to mind the perfume that Corinna usually carried about her, and caused him a thrilling sensation. This long and irksome festival fatigued him; he remembered the taste of Corinna in the arrangement of a *fête*, her intelligence in all that regarded the fine arts, and he felt that it was only in regular domestic life that Lucilia appeared a pleasing companion. All that pertained in the least to the world of imagination, to poetry, brought Corinna to his recollection, and renewed his regrets. Whilst he was in this disposition of mind, some of his friends

approached—they discoursed some moments together, and Corinna then heard the voice of Oswald.

What an inexpressible emotion does the voice of those we love cause in our soul! What a confused medley of tenderness and terror! There are expressions so exquisite, that our feeble nature trembles for itself when swayed by them!

One of Oswald's friends said to him :—
“Do you not think it a charming ball?”
—“Yes,” answered he, “yes, very much so,” added he, with a sigh. This sigh, and the melancholy tone of his voice, excited in Corinna a lively joy. She thought herself certain of regaining the heart of Oswald, and rising precipitately, she advanced towards one of the domestics, to send a message to him. Had she completed this design, how different had been her destiny and that of Nelville!

At this moment Lucilia approached the

window, and seeing through the gloom, a lady clad in white, but not in a ball dress, her curiosity was excited. She thrust her head forward, and looking at her attentively, thought she discovered the features of her sister; and, believing her dead, the fear occasioned by this sight caused her to faint away. Every body ran to her assistance. Corinna found no domestic to whom she could speak, and retired further down the walk to escape observation.

Lucilia recovered, but dared not confess what had occasioned her swoon. As from her infancy, her mind had been strongly impressed by her mother, with every religious idea, she persuaded herself that she had seen the spirit of her sister moving to the tomb of her father, to reproach her with forgetting his remains; for having caused the sounds of revelry to disturb this retreat, without at

least, fulfilling before, a pious duty towards his revered ashes. Lucilia, therefore watched her opportunity, and unperceived by any person, quitted the ball room. Corinna astonished at seeing her thus alone in the garden, imagined that Lord Nelville would speedily join her, and that, perhaps, he had asked a secret interview to obtain permission to disclose their passion to Lady Edgermond. This idea rendered her motionless; but soon she remarked that Lucilia had turned her steps towards the wood where the tomb of her father stood, and accusing herself for not having carried thither first the offering of her sighs and tears, she followed her sister at some distance, favoured by the shadow of the trees and the darkness of the night. At length she perceived the black sarcophagus raised over the spot where the remains of Lord Edgermond were buried. A deep emo-

tion caused her to stop, and support herself against a tree. Lucilia also stopped, and made a respectful inclination of her body at the sight of the tomb.

Corinna at this moment was ready to discover herself to her sister, and demand of her in the name of their father, her rank and her husband ; but Lucilia advanced precipitately to approach the monument, and Corinna's courage failed her.—There is in the female character so much timidity, united to impetuosity of feeling, that a little may restrain, as a little may hurry them away.—Lucilia knelt before the tomb of her father ; she put aside her flaxen hair, which was bound with a wreath of flowers ; and lifted her eyes to heaven in prayer, with an angelic look. Corinna had placed herself behind the trees, and without a possibility of being discovered, she easily discerned her sister, upon whom the moon

shed a silver beam, and soon felt herself seized with the most pure and generous affection. She contemplated that expression of piety so pure, that countenance so young, in which the traits of infancy were yet remarkable; she recalled the time when she had acted as a mother to Lucilia; she reflected on herself; she considered that she was near thirty years of age, near that period when the decline of youth begins, whilst her sister had a long and indefinite future before her, disturbed by no recollection, by no past action, for which she was responsible either to others or to her own conscience.—“ If I shew myself to Lucilia,” said she to herself, “ if I speak to her, that soul, in which all is calm, will soon be disturbed, and peace perhaps will never enter it again. My own past sufferings may teach me to bear their continuance, but the innocent Lucilia would pass in a moment from the

most perfect tranquillity to the cruellest state of agitation, and it is I who have nursed her in my arms, and lulled her to sleep upon my bosom ; it is I who would precipitate her into the world of sorrow.”

—Thus thought Corinna. However, love waged a cruel war in her heart, with this disinterested sentiment, this exaltation of the soul, which led her to sacrifice herself to the happiness of her sister.

Lucilia then said aloud :—“ O my father, pray for me ! ”—Corinna heard it, and falling on her knees also, she supplicated the paternal benediction on two sisters at once, and shed tears that were wrung from her by sentiments more pure than love. Lucilia continuing her prayer, pronounced distinctly these words :—“ O my sister, intercede for me in Heaven ; you loved me in my infancy, continue to protect me.”—Ah ! how was Corinna affected by this prayer ! Lucilia in conclu-

sion, said, with a voice full of fervor:—
“ Pardon me, father, a moment of forgetfulness, which a sentiment ordained by yourself has caused. I am not guilty in loving him whom you destined for my husband ; but finish your work, and induce him to choose me for the companion of his life. I can only be happy with him ; but never shall he know that I love him—never shall my trembling heart betray its secret ; Oh my God ! Oh my father ! comfort your daughter, and render her worthy of the esteem and tenderness of Oswald.”—“ Yes,” repeated Corinna, in a low voice, “ hear her prayer, my father, and for your other child procure a sweet and tranquil death !”

In finishing this solemn request, the greatest effort of which the soul of Corinna was capable, she drew from her bosom, the letter which contained Oswald's ring, and rapidly quitted the spot.

She felt that in sending this letter to Nelville, without informing him that she was in England, every tie would be dissolved between them, and she would give Lucilia to Oswald ; but in presence of the tomb, the obstacles which separated her from him offered themselves to her reflection with more force than ever ; she remembered the words of Mr. Dickson : “ *His father forbade him to espouse this Italian,*” and she conceived that he joined in the same sentiment, and that thus paternal authority, in every way, condemned her love. The innocence of Lucilia, her youth, her purity of soul, elevated her imagination, and she felt a momentary pride in sacrificing herself to restore Oswald to peace with his country, with his family, and with himself.

The music which she heard in approaching the castle, supported the courage of Corinna. She perceived a poor

blind old man, seated at the foot of a tree, and listening to the noise of the festival. She put her letter into his hands, and desired him to give it to one of the servants of the castle. By this means she did not risk Lord Nelville's discovering that a Lady had brought the letter. In effect, whoever had seen Corinna delivering this letter, would have said that it contained the fate of her life. Her looks, her trembling hand, her solemn and faltering voice, all announced one of those terrible moments when destiny rules us, when the wretched mortal no longer acts but as the slave of that fatality which pursues him.

Corinna observed the old man, who was led by a faithful dog, at a distance ; she saw him deliver the letter to one of Lord Nelville's servants, who was by chance taking other letters to the castle. Every circumstance combined to deprive her of hope. Corinna turned back a few steps to see the

servant to the door, and when he was out of her sight, when she had proceeded some way on her return, when she no longer heard the music, and when even the lights of the castle had disappeared, a cold sweat bedewed her forehead, a deadly shivering seized her: she wished to proceed, but nature refused, and she fell senseless on the road.

BOOK XVIII.

*The Retreat to Florence.*

CHAPTER I.

THE Count d'Erfeuil after having passed some time in Switzerland, and grown *ennuyé* with nature in the Alps, as he had been already 'tired of the arts at Rome, suddenly felt a desire to go to England, where he was assured he would find profundity of thinking, and one morning when he awoke, he persuaded himself that

that was all he wanted. This third essay had not succeeded better than the two former ; but in a moment his attachment for Lord Nelville revived, and having said to himself one day, that happiness can only consist in true friendship, he set out for Scotland. He went first to Lord Nelville's, and did not find him at home ; but having learnt that he might be met with at Lady Edgermond's, he hastened to join him there, so urgent did he think the necessity of seeing him. As he was passing along very rapidly, he perceived a female extended without motion by the side of the road : he stopped, dismounted, and hastened to succour her. What was his surprise at discovering, spite of her deadly pale, the features of Corinna ! He was seized with the most lively pity ; with the aid of his servant he arranged some branches, in the form of a litter, and his intention was to transport her in this man-

ner to Lady Edgermond's, when Theresa, who had remained in Corinna's carriage, uneasy at not finding her mistress return, arrived, and believing that Lord Nelville alone could have reduced her to this condition, determined that she should be taken to the neighbouring town. The Count d'Erfeuil followed Corinna, and during eight days that she had a delirious fever, he never quitted her; thus it was the frivolous man who soothed her in affliction, and the sentimental man who pierced her heart.

This contrast struck Corinna when she recovered her senses, and she thanked the Count d'Erfeuil with a profound emotion; he answered by endeavouring to console her; but he was more capable of noble actions than of serious expressions, and Corinna was rather to find in him the hand of assistance than the soul of friendship. She endeavoured to recal her

bewildered thoughts, and recollect what had passed ; but it was a long time before she could even remember the step she had lately taken, and the motives which had determined her to it. Perhaps she began to think her sacrifice too great, and thought at least to bid a last adieu to Lord Nelville personally, before she quitted England, when on the day after she had recovered her recollection, she saw in a newspaper, that fell into her hands by chance, the following article :

“ Lady Edgermond has just learnt that her daughter-in-law, whom she believed dead in Italy, is now living at Rome, under the name of Corinna, and, enjoys a great literary reputation. Lady Edgermond is proud to acknowledge her, and to share with her the inheritance of Lord Edgermond’s brother, who has lately died in the Indies.

“ Lord Nelville is next Sunday to espouse Miss Lucilia Edgermond, youngest

daughter of Lord Edgermond, and only child of Lady Edgermond, his widow. The marriage contract was signed yesterday."

Corinna, unfortunately for her did not lose her senses in reading this news: a sudden revolution took place in her mind—every worldly interest abandoned her, she felt like a person condemned to die, but who does not know when the sentence will be executed; and from that moment the resignation of despair was the only sentiment of her soul.

The Count d'Erfeuil on entering her chamber found her more pale than when he first saw her speechless on the road, and began to question her with great anxiety.—“I am no longer ill, I wish the day after to-morrow, which is Sunday,” said she, with solemnity, “to set out for Plymouth, whence I will embark for Italy.”—“I will accompany you,” answered the Count warmly, “I have nothing to de-

tain me in England. I shall be delighted to perform this journey along with you.” —“ You are very good,” answered Corinna, “ we must not judge from appearances.” —Then checking herself, she continued, “ I accept of your company as far as Plymouth, for I could not be sure of finding my way thither, but, when once embarked, the ship will conduct me to my place of destination in whatever condition I may be.” —She made a sign to the Count d’Erfeuil to leave her, when she wept for a long time, and prayed to God for strength to support her affliction. She was no longer the impetuous Corinna, the energies of her soul were exhausted, and this annihilation, for which she could not account to herself, restored her to tranquillity. Misfortune had subdued her: must not the most rebellious sooner or later bend their neck beneath its yoke?

On the Sunday following Corinna left

Scotland, accompanied by the Count d'Erfeuil.—“ This is the day,” said she rising from her bed to enter her carriage, “ this is the day !”—The Count d'Erfeuil wished to interrogate her ; but she answered not, and resumed her wonted silence. They passed before a church, and Corinna asked permission of the Count to enter it for a moment ; she knelt before the altar, and imagining that she saw Oswald and Lucilia there, she prayed for them ; but the emotion she felt was so strong, that in rising she staggered, and could not take a step without the support of Theresa and the Count, who came to meet her. Every body in church rose to make way for her, and seemed to behold her with the most lively pity.—“ I look very ill then,” said she to the Count, “ there are others younger and more captivating than me, who, at this moment are leaving church with a triumphant step.”

The Count d'Erfeuil did not understand the conclusion of this speech ; he possessed goodness of heart, but no sensibility ; so that in the course of the journey, much as he loved Corinna, he was weary of her sadness, and endeavoured to remove it, as if to forget the miseries of life only depended on an effort of the will. Sometimes he said to her:—“ *You know I told you how it would happen.*” Singular mode of consolation ! The satisfaction which vanity derives from the grief of another.

Corinna made astonishing efforts to dissimulate her sufferings ; for we feel ashamed of strong affections before a superficial character ; a sentiment of bashfulness attaches itself to all that requires explanation, and to those secrets of the soul which can only receive consolation from those who know how to discover them. Corinna felt angry with herself at not being sufficiently grateful for the attention of the Count ;

but there was in his voice, in his accent, and in his look, such an air of absence, such a want of amusement, that one was incessantly led to forget his generous actions as he forgot them himself. It is, doubtless, very noble to set little value upon our own meritorious services ; but this very indifference, so laudable in itself, may be the effect of frivolity.

Corinna during her delirium had betrayed all her secrets, and the public papers had acquainted Count d'Erfeuil with the rest : he frequently wished to converse with her concerning *her affairs*, as he called them : but the use of this word alone was sufficient to freeze the confidence of Corinna, and she besought him never to oblige her to pronounce the name of Lord Nelville. When the moment arrived that she was to take her leave of the Count, she knew not how to express her acknowledgement ; for she was at once glad to find herself alone,

and sorry to part with a man who had behaved so well to her. She essayed to thank him ; but he desired her so naturally to say no more about it, that she was silent. She charged him to announce to Lady Edgermond that she entirely declined the inheritance of her uncle, and besought him to perform this commission as if he had received it from her in Italy, and by no means to let her mother-in-law know that she had been in England.

“ May I tell Lord Nelville of it ?” said the Count—Corinna started at these words. She was silent for some moments, and then answered : “ You will be at liberty to inform him of it very soon—yes, very soon—my friends, at Rome will tell you when.”—“ Pray, take care of your health,” said the Count, “ do you know I am uneasy about you ?” “ Indeed ?” answered Corinna, smiling, “ but in effect I believe you have reason.”—The Count gave

his arm to conduct her to the ship: the moment she embarked, she turned her eyes towards England, towards that country which she was quitting for ever, and where dwelt the only object of her tenderness and her grief; her eyes were filled with tears, the first she had ever shed in presence of the Count.—“Lovely Corinna!” said he to her, “forget an ungrateful man; think on your friends, who are so tenderly attached to you—take my advice, and reflect with pleasure on the advantages you possess.” — Corinna, at these words, withdrew her hand from the Count, and went some paces from him; then reproaching herself, for this movement she returned, and bid him a gentle adieu. The Count d’Erfeuil did not observe what was passing in the soul of Corinna: he entered the boat with her, strongly recommended her to the care of the captain, with the most amiable, attention occupied him-

self with every minute circumstance that might render her passage agreeable, and returning in the boat, he saluted the vessel with his handkerchief till out of sight. Corinna was grateful to the Count; but was he her only friend and supporter in the hour of calamity?

Light sentiments have often a long duration : nothing breaks because nothing binds them; they follow the current of circumstances, and disappear and return with them, whilst the profound affections irrevocably destroy one another, and only leave a painful wound in their place.

CHAP. II.

A FAVOURABLE wind transported Corinna to Leghorn in less than a month. She had the fever all the time of her passage, and such was her dejection, that her mental sufferings being joined to her corporal malady, all her impressions were confounded together, and left in her no distinct trace. On landing in Italy, she hesitated whether she should proceed directly to Rome; but notwithstanding her best friends attended her there, she felt an insurmountable repugnance to inhabiting those scenes where she had known Os-

wald. She shuddered at the idea of returning to her house, whose door opened twice a day to receive him; she therefore resolved to repair to Florence, and as she felt a presentiment that her life would not long resist her sufferings, it was most desirable for her to detach herself by degrees from existence, and to begin first by living alone; at a distance from her friends—at a distance from that city which had witnessed the triumph of her genius—at a distance from that abode where they would endeavour to call forth her talents, and ask her to shew herself what she was formerly, whilst an invincible despondency would render odious every effort of her mind.

In traversing Tuscany, that fertile country, in approaching Florence, so perfumed with flowers, in meeting again, in fact, her native Italy, Corinna felt nothing but sadness: all those rustic beauties, which

at another time had intoxicated her, now only filled her with melancholy. “ *How terrible,*” says Milton, “ *is the despair which this air so sweet, cannot calm!*” Love or religion is necessary to the enjoyment of nature, and at this moment the unhappy Corinna, had lost the first blessing on earth, without having recovered that calm which only devotion can give to the child of sensibility and wretchedness.

Tuscany is a very cultivated and delightful country ; but it does not strike the imagination like the environs of Rome. The Romans have so well effaced the primitive institutions of the people, who formerly inhabited Tuscany, that it contains scarcely any of those ancient traces which render Rome and Naples so interesting. But there is another kind of historical beauty observable here, namely, cities bearing the stamp of the republican genius of the middle age. At Sienna, the

public square in which the people assembled, and the balcony from which the magistrates harangued them, strike the attention of travellers in the least capable of reflection—we feel that a democratic government has existed there.

It is truly a pleasure to hear the Tuscans, even of the most inferior class: their expressions full of imagination and elegance, convey an idea of the gratification that must have been experienced in the city of Athens, when the people spoke that harmonious Greek which was like a continual music. It is a very singular sensation to believe one's-self in the midst of a nation, of which every individual is sufficiently cultivated, and appears of the superior class; it is, at least, a momentary illusion produced by the purity of the language.

The aspect of Florence recals its history before the elevation of the Medicii to the

sovereign power ; the palaces of the principal families are built like fortresses ; the rings of iron are still to be seen to which the standards of each party were fixed ; in fact, every thing seems to have been arranged to maintain individual power, rather than to defend a common interest. One would say that the city is built for a state of civil war. There are towers at the palace of Justice, whence the approach of an enemy may be seen. Family feuds were such, that palaces are to be seen most oddly constructed, because their possessors would not have them extend to the land, where the house of their enemies were razed. Here the Pazzii have conspired against the Medicii ; there the Guelphs have assassinated the Gibelins ; in fact, the traces of strife and rivalry are to be seen every where. The stones are the only testimonies of those animosities now buried in profound sleep. Hatred

exists no longer, because there no longer exists any subject of contention, and a state without glory and without power, is no longer disputed by its inhabitants.—The life which is now led at Florence is singularly monotonous; they go a walking every afternoon on the banks of the Arno, and in the evening they ask one another if they have been there.

Corinna took a country house a little distance from the city. She informed the Prince Castel-Forte that she had settled there, and this letter was the only one she wrote; for she had conceived such a horror for every common action of life, that the least resolution to take, or the least order to give, was for her an additional pang. Her days were passed in complete inactivity; she got up, she went to bed; she got up again, and opened a book without being able to comprehend a line of it. She often remained for whole hours at her

window; then she would walk to the garden with a hurried step, gather a nosegay of flowers, and endeavour to intoxicate herself with their perfume. In fact, the sense of existence pursued her like a ceaseless torment, and she tried a thousand resources to calm the faculty of thinking, which no longer presented to her as before a wide field of reflection; but haunted her with one single idea—one single image armed with daggers.

CHAP. III.

ONE day Corinna resolved to go and see the beautiful churches which adorn the city of Florence, recollecting that some hours passed in St. Peter's at Rome, always tranquillized her mind. To reach the city she traversed the charming wood which is on the banks of the Arno: it was a delightful evening in the month of June; the air was embalmed by an inconceivable abundance of roses, and every countenance that she met there was expressive of happiness. Corinna felt her sadness re-

doubled, in beholding herself excluded from this general felicity, which Providence accords to most human beings, but she blessed the bountiful hand with which he dispensed happiness to man.—“ I am an exception to the universal order,” said she to herself, “ there is felicity everywhere, and this terrible faculty of suffering, by which I am destroyed, is a mode of feeling peculiar to myself. O my God! Why hast thou selected me for such woe? Might I not ask like thy divine son, “ *that this cup may pass from me?*”

The active and busy air of the inhabitants of the city astonished Corinna. Since she no longer felt any interest in this life, she did not conceive what impulse led her to walk on the broad pavement of Florence; now advancing, now returning; sometimes with a slow, sometimes with a hurried step. She had forgotten where she intended to go; at

length she found herself before the famous brazen gates sculptured by Ghiberti, for the font of St. John, which is by the side of the cathedral of Florence.

She examined this immense work, where nations of bronze in very small, but very distinct proportions, offer a multitude of various physiognomies, which all express one thought of the artist, one conception of his mind.—“What patience!” cried Corinna, “What respect for posterity! and yet how few minutely examine these gates, which the crowd pass by with vacant ignorance or disdain. How powerful is death! How difficult it is for man to escape oblivion! It is in this cathedral, that Julian de Medicis was assassinated; not far from there, in the church of St. Lorenzo, is seen the marble chapel, enriched with precious stones, in which are the tombs of the Medicii, and the statues of Julian and Lorenzo, by Michael An-

gelo. That of Lorenzo de Medicis, meditating vengeance for the assassination of his brother, has merited the honour of being called, "*The thought of Michael Angélo.*" At the foot of these statues are those of Aurora and Night. The awaking of the one, and especially the sleep of the other, have a remarkable expression. A poet wrote some verses on the statue of Night, which finished with these words: "*Though asleep she lives. Dost thou not believe it? awake her—she will speak to thee.*" Michael Angélo, who cultivated letters, without which imagination in all its varieties quickly fades, answered in the name of Night:

Grato m'è il sonno, è più l'esser di sasso ;
Mentre che il danno e la vergogna dura,
Non veder, non sentir m'è gran ventura.
Però, non mi destar, deh ! parlar basso.

“I am happy in being asleep ; but more happy in being of marble. As long as injustice and shame shall last, it is a great blessing for me not to see and hear ; therefore speak softly and do not wake me.”

Michael Angelo is the only modern sculptor who has given to the human figure a character which neither resembles the beauty of antiquity, nor the affectation of our days ; we fancy that we see in them the spirit of the middle age, an energetic but gloomy soul, a constant activity, shapes well marked, and features that bear the stamp of passions, but do not retrace the ideal part of beauty. Michael Angelo is a genius of his own school ; for he has not even imitated the ancients.

His tomb is in the church of *Santa Croce*. He desired it to be placed opposite a window, from which might be seen the dome built by Filippo Brunelleschi, as if

his ashes would be rejoiced by the aspect of this cupola, the model of that of St. Peter. This church of *Santa Croce* contains, perhaps, the most brilliant assemblage of dead of any in Europe. Corinna felt herself deeply moved in walking between these two ranks of tombs. Here is Galileo, who was persecuted of men for having discovered the secrets of the skies; farther on Machiavel, who revealed the Art of Crime, rather as an observer than a criminal; but whose lessons profit the oppressors more than the oppressed; Aretin, a man who consecrated his days to pleasantries, and found death to be the only serious thing on earth; Boccace, whose smiling imagination has resisted the united scourges of civil war and pestilence; a picture in honour of Danté, as if the Florentines, who let him perish in exile, had any reason to be proud of his fame. (9)

To conclude, several other honourable names are to be remarked in this spot; names celebrated during their lives, but whose lustre burns more feebly from generation to generation, till at length they will become entirely extinguished. (10)

The view of this church, decorated with such noble recollections, awakened the enthusiasm of Corinna: she was disheartened at the aspect of the living, but the silent presence of the dead revived, at least for a moment, that emulation of glory which she had formerly felt. She walked down the church with a firm step, and some thoughts of other times still traversed her soul; she saw beneath these vaults, some young priests, who were singing in a low voice as they walked slowly along the choir; she asked one of them the meaning of the ceremony?—“*We are praying for our dead,*” answered he.—“Yes, you

are in the right," thought Corinna, "to call them *your dead*; it is the only glorious property left you. Ah! why has Oswald destroyed those gifts which I had received from Heaven, and which were given me to excite enthusiasm in souls congenial with my own? O my God!" cried she, kneeling down, "it is not from a motive of vain pride that I conjure you to restore the talents you had granted me. Undoubtedly those saints who lived and died for you in obscurity, rank the highest in your estimation; but mortals have different spheres of action, and that genius which could celebrate generous virtues, that genius which would consecrate itself to all that is noble, humane, and true, might be received, at least, in the outer porch of Heaven!"—The eyes of Corinna were cast down in finishing this prayer, when they were struck with the

following inscription, on the tomb-stone upon which she knelt :

“ I was *single* at my birth,
And *single* did I die ;
And *single* now in earth,
A breathless corpse I lie !”

“ Ah !” said Corinna, “ this is the answer to my prayer. What emulation can we feel when alone upon earth ? Who would now share my fame ? Who would interest himself in my fate ? What sentiment could stimulate my mind to exercise ? I should need his look for my reward.”

Another epitaph also fixed her attention, on the tomb of a young man—it was as follows :—“ *Pity me not—you know not how many pains this tomb has spared me !*”—“ What an indifference for life do these words inspire,” said Corinna, shedding tears. In the tumult of this city

stands this church, which would teach men, were they willing, the most important of all secrets; but they pass without entering, and the marvellous illusion of forgetfulness is the spring of human action.

CHAP. IV.

THE transient gleam of emulation which brought consolation to Corinna, conducted her the next day to the Florence gallery; she flattered herself with the hope of recovering there her former taste for the arts, and imbibing some relish for occupations once so interesting to her. The fine arts are still very republican at Florence; the statues and paintings are open to inspection at every hour. Learned men, paid by the government, are appointed as public functionaries to explain these *chefs-d'œuvre*. It is a remnant of that respect

for talent which has always existed in Italy, particularly at Florence, since the Medicii wished to soften the idea of their power by their wit, and their ascendancy over human action by the free agency they allowed to thought. The common people at Florence are much attached to the arts, and blend this taste with a religious devotion, which is more regular in Tuscany than in any other part of Italy; it is not uncommon to see them confound mythological figures with Christian history. A Florentine, one of the common people, once shewed to some strangers a Minerva which he called Judith, an Apollo whom he named David, and certified, in explaining a bas-relief, which represented the siege of Troy, that Cassandra *was a good christian.*

The gallery of Florence is an immense collection, and one might pass many days there without knowing all its valuable

contents, Corinna surveyed these objects, and it was with the most painful emotions that she felt herself absent and indifferent. The statue of Niobe interested her : she was struck with that calm, that dignity, in the midst of the most profound grief: undoubtedly, in a similar situation, the figure of a real mother would be entirely altered; but the ideal of the arts preserves beauty in the midst of despair; and what touches deeply in works of genius is not misfortune itself, but the power which the soul maintains over that misfortune. Not far from the statue of Niobe is the head of a dying Alexander; these two kinds of physiognomy afford much food for thought. There is depicted in that of Alexander, astonishment and indignation at not being able to overcome nature. The anguish of maternal love is painted in every feature of Niobe; she presses her son to

her bosom with the most heart-rending anxiety, and the grief expressed by this admirable figure, bears the character of that fatality, which among the ancients, left the soul of wretchedness no refuge in religion. Niobe lifts her eyes to heaven, but without hope, for even the gods are her enemies.

Corinna, on her return home, tried to reflect on what she had seen, and to commit her thoughts to paper as formerly ; but an invincible absence arrested her at every page. How far was she then beneath that talent which prompted her extempore effusions ! Every word cost her trouble to find, and often she employed words without meaning, words at which she herself was shocked when she read them over again, as she would be at words written in the delirium of a fever. Feeling herself then incapable of turning her thoughts from her own situation, she

painted what she suffered ; but her ideas were general, her sentiments of that universal nature which answers to every heart ; it was the cry of grief, monotonous as that of the bird of night ; there was too much order, too much impetuosity, and too little shadowing in her expressions ; they were characteristic of misfortune ; but not indicative of talent.—Undoubtedly, in order to write well, we must feel a real emotion ; but it must not be an emotion which disorders the mind. Happiness is necessary in all, and the melancholy feeling must be inspired by a fit of enthusiasm which supposes a perfect sanity of intellectual enjoyment.—Real grief has no natural fecundity ; what it produces is only a gloomy agitation incessantly recurring to the same thoughts. Such was the lot of the knight, who pursued by a fatal destiny, made a thousand winding journies, and always found him-

self arrive at the spot from which he set out.

The bad state of Corinna's health also assisted in undermining her genius. The reflections here subjoined have been found among her papers; they were such as dropped from her pen at this time, when she made vain efforts to produce a connected work.

CHAP. V.

Fragments of Corinna's Thoughts.

“ My talents are fled, and I lament their loss! I could have wished my name to reach him, encircled with literary fame. I could have wished that he might read a work of mine, containing sentiments in sympathy with his own.

“ I was wrong to hope, that in returning to his country, and conforming to its customs, he would preserve those ideas and those sentiments which could alone unite

us. There is so much to say against a female such as me, and but one answer to it all—the possession of such a mind and soul as mine—what an answer is this to the bulk of mankind ?

“ The world is in the wrong to fear superiority of mind and elevation of soul—this superiority is very moral ; for expansive comprehension renders us very indulgent, and profound feeling inspires great goodness of heart.

“ How can it happen that two beings who have confided to each other their most intimate thoughts, who have conversed on God, on the immortality of the soul, and on grief, are become suddenly strangers to each other ? What an astonishing mystery is love ! It is either the most sublime sentiment of the soul, or nothing—warm as the devotion of martyrs, or cold as the commonest friendship. Does that which

is the most involuntary sentiment in the world, proceed from heaven, or is it born of terrestrial passions? Ought we to submit to it or combat its power? Alas! what a tempest has it created in my soul!

“Talent ought to be a resource to the unfortunate; when Dominiquino was shut up in a convent, he painted superb pictures upon the walls of his prison, and left masterpieces of art to indicate his retreat; but his sufferings proceeded from exterior circumstances; the root of sorrow was not in the soul; when it is there the source of every great achievement is dried up.

“I often scrutinize my own character as I think a stranger would do, and I pity myself. I was endowed with intellect, I was sincere, kind, generous, and sensible—why should all this lead to unhappiness? Is the world really depraved? Do

certain qualities disarm us instead of increasing our strength ?

“ It is a pity—I was born for distinction, and, notwithstanding my past celebrity, I shall die unknown. Had I been happy, had I not been devoured by this fever of the heart, I should have contemplated human destiny from an eminence, I should have discovered unknown relations between nature and its author ; but I am seized by the grasp of misfortune ; how can I think freely when I feel the icy power every time I essay to breathe ?

“ Why has he not tried to render happy a female who had disclosed to him only, the secret of her soul, whose heart conversed with him alone ? Alas ! it is possible to separate from the generality of women whose love is indiscriminate ; but for her who must admire the man on whom she bestows her affections, whose judg-

ment is penetrating though her imagination be exalted, there is only one object in the universe.

“ I have not found life such as I read it in the poets ; there is something barren in reality which we would in vain alter.

“ The recollection of my fame, excites in me a sentiment of irritation. Why tell me that I was charming if I was not to be beloved ? Why inspire me with confidence in my attractions, that I might only be the more dreadfully undeceived ? Will he find in another more mind, more soul, more tenderness than he has found in me ? No ; he will be satisfied with less ; he will feel himself more in harmony with society—Society ! what coined pleasures and pains it yields !

“ We need nothing in presence of the sun and of the starry firmament, than to love and to feel worthy of each other.

But society! how callous does it render the heart, how frivolous the mind! How does it make our existence depend upon what people say of us! Could men meet one day each individual disengaged from the influence of all, what a pure air would enter the soul! How many new ideas, how many genuine feelings would refresh it!

“Nature is also cruel. My figure is about to decay, and vainly should I feel those tender affections which my eyes would no longer express.

“There is in my heart a deep sorrow which I shall never be able to describe, not even in writing—I have not strength sufficient—only love can sound the abyss.

“How happy are men who can seek the field of battle, expose their life, and give themselves up to the enthusiasm of honor and danger! But women have no

external consolation ! Their motionless existence in the presence of misfortune is a lingering torment !

“ Sometimes when I hear the sound of music, it brings to mind my talent for singing, for dancing, and for poetry ; I then feel inclined to disengage myself from misfortune, and recover my wonted gaiety ; but, on a sudden, an internal feeling makes me shudder ; I am like a spectre desirous of remaining on the earth when the beams of day, when the approach of the living force it to disappear.

I would mix in the word in order to call off my attention ; I was once beloved by that world, and loaded with benefits by it : the reflections of solitude carry me too far back, or hurry me too much forward ; my genius was improved by the mutability of my impressions. I have now something sullen in my look as well as in my mind : gaiety, grace, imagination, whither are you

fled ! Ah ! fain would I taste though it were but for a moment, the sweets of hope ! But alas ! the desert is inexorable—a drop of water is as unattainable as the river itself—A day's happiness is as much beyond my reach as a whole life of felicity.

I think him guilty towards me ; but when I compare him with other men how do they sink in the comparison—how affected, narrow-minded and miserable do they appear ! He seems an angel in the contrast, but an angel armed with the burning sword which has destroyed my life. Him that we love, seems commissioned by the deity with the punishment of our earthly crimes.

“ The first passion is not indelible, it proceeds from the natural disposition of the soul to love ; but, when after having known life, we meet in full exercise of our judgment, that mind and that heart which we had vainly sought till then, imagina-

tion is subdued by truth, and we have reason to be unhappy.

On the contrary, how foolish it is—the greater part of mankind will say—to die for love, as if there were not a thousand other modes of existence! Enthusiasm of every kind is ridiculous to him who does not feel it. Poetry, devotion, love, and religion have all the same origin, and there are men in whose eyes each of these is folly. All is folly, if people choose to call it so, beyond the care that we take to live—the rest may be error and illusion.

It is my peculiar misfortune, that he alone knew me for what I am, and perhaps he will find one day that I alone really understood his character; mine is at once the most easy and the most difficult in the world; every generous soul is for me a suitable companion for some moments; but for intimate connection, for real affection, there is none but Oswald that

I can love—What an union of imagination, mind, and sensibility! Where else in the universe is it to be found?

“What could I say to others? To whom could I speak? What aim, what interest is left me? I am familiar with the most bitter grief, as well as the most delectable pleasure, and the future is to me only the spectre of the past.

“Why is happiness so fleeting? Why should it be more fragile than any other state? Is grief most consistent with the order of nature? Suffering is a convulsion to the body but a habit to the mind.

“Ahi! null' altro che pianto al mondo dura.”

PETRARCH.

“Nothing in the world is lasting but woe!”

In another life my reliance is placed; but such is the force of this, that we seek in heaven the same sentiments that have occupied us upon earth. In the Nothern

mythology, the shadow of the hunter is described pursuing the shadow of a stag ; but by what authority are we told that they are shadows ? Where upon earth shall we find reality ? There is nothing certain but pain—alone pitilessly true to its promise.

“ I incessantly dream of immortality ; but no longer of that which man can give ; those, who according to the expression of Dante, *will call antiquity the present time*, no longer interest me ; but I do not believe in the annihilation of the heart. No, my God, I do not believe it. To you I dedicate this heart which he has refused, and you will accept an offering which a mortal has despised.

“ I feel that I shall not live long, and this thought restores calm to my soul. It is sweet, in a condition like mine, to grow feeble, for so the sense of pain becomes dull and edgeless.

“ I know not why in affliction we are more capable of superstition than of piety; I draw omens from every thing, and hitherto I can confide in nothing. Ah! how sweet is devotion in the hour of happiness! What gratitude towards the Supreme Being must be felt by the wife of Oswald!

“ Undoubtedly grief elevates the human character towards perfection:—we connect in our minds, our faults with our misfortunes, and always a link, visible at least to our eyes, unites them; but this salutary effect has its final limits.

“ A deep collectedness of mind is necessary to me before I can obtain

“ - - - - - Tranquillo varco

“ A più tranquilla vita.”

“ A tranquil passage towards a more happy life.”

When I shall be lain on the bed of death, calm will revive in my heart: there is

much innocence in the thoughts of a dying mind, and I love the sentiments which such a situation inspires.

“ Inconceivable enigma of life, which neither passion, grief, nor genius can discover. Will you then be revealed to my prayer ; perhaps these mysteries are explained by the most simple idea of all ; perhaps we have approached it a thousand times in our reveries ! But the last step is impossible, and vain efforts of every kind fatigue the soul. It is time that mine should repose.

“ Fermossi al fin il cor che balzò tanto.”

HIPPOLITO PINDEMONTE.

“ This heart, which beat so quickly, has at length ceased its motion.”

CHAP. VI.

THE Prince Castel-Forte quitted Rome to settle at Florence near Corinna ; she was very grateful for this proof of friendship ; but she was a little ashamed of no longer being able to infuse that charm into conversation which she did before. She was absent and taciturn ; the decay of her health deprived her of strength to triumph, for even a moment, over the sentiments that occupied her. In speaking, she preserved that benignity of soul which always characterized her ; but she was no

longer animated by the desire of pleasing. When love is united to wretchedness, it freezes all the other affections, and we cannot explain to ourselves what is passing in the soul ; but in proportion as we gain by happiness we lose by misery. The addition to our life, which proceeds from a sentiment that increases our enjoyment of nature, extends its effect to all the relations of society ; but existence is so impoverished, when this immense hope is destroyed, that we become incapable of any spontaneous emotion. It is for this reason that so many duties command women, and especially men, to respect and to dread the love which they inspire ; for this passion may for ever lay waste the mind as well as the heart.

The Prince Castel-Forte tried to discourse with Corinna on those topics which formerly interested her ; she was sometimes for several minutes without answering, be-

cause at first she had not heard him ; at length the sound of his voice, and the idea reached her, when she said something which had neither the colouring nor the vivacity that was formerly admired in her speaking, but which served to keep the conversation a going for some minutes, and permitted her to relapse into her reveries. She would then make a new effort, not to discourage the kindness of the Prince Castel-Forte, and often she took one word for another, or said the contrary of what she had said before ; when she smiled with pity on herself, and asked pardon of her friend for this kind of conscious insanity.

The Prince ventured to speak to her of Oswald, and he even thought that Corinna took a bitter pleasure in this conversation ; but towards the conclusion, she seemed in such agony that he determined never to hazard the subject again. The

Prince possessed a sensible mind ; but a man, and particularly a man who has been warmly interested by a woman, knows not, generous as he may be, how to console her for that passion which she feels for another. A little self-love on his part, and timidity on her's, prevent the intimacy of confidence from being complete : besides of what use would it be ? only that grief admits a remedy which would become healed of itself.

Corinna and the Prince Castel-Forte took a walk every day together on the banks of the Arno. He went over every topic of conversation, with an amiable mixture of interest and precaution : she thanked him in squeezing his hand. Sometimes she essayed to discourse on the affections of the heart ; her eyes were filled with tears, and her emotion made her ill ; her paleness and tremour were painful to behold, and her friend

sought immediately to divert her from these ideas. One day she indulged in pleasantries with her wonted grace—the Prince Castel-Forte beheld her with surprise and joy; but she immediately melted into tears and withdrew.

She returned to dinner, and stretching her hand to her friend, said, “Forgive me, I wished to be agreeable to recompense your kindness, but that is impossible; be generous enough, therefore, to bear with me, such as I am.”—What most alarmed the Prince was the state of Corinna’s health. She was not yet menaced by any immediate danger, but it was impossible that she could live long if some happy circumstance did not restore her strength. About this time, the Prince received a letter from Lord Neville, and though it could not alter the posture of things, since it confirmed his marriage, yet this letter contained words

that would have deeply affected Corinna. The Prince reflected for hours together, to determine whether or not he ought to excite in Corinna a lively impression, by shewing her this letter; but she appeared in such a feeble condition, that he dared not. Whilst he was in this state of deliberation, he received a second letter from Lord Nelville, equally filled with sentiments which would have awakened the tenderest feelings of Corinna, but containing the news of his departure for America. Then the Prince determined to say nothing to her about it. Perhaps he did wrong, for one of the most bitter pangs Corinna felt proceeded from Lord Nelville's not writing to her; she dared not avow it to any body; but though Oswald was for ever separated from her, a remembrance, a regret on his part would have been dear to her soul. What appeared to her most dreadful, was, that ab-

solute silence which did not even afford her occasion to pronounce his name, or to hear it pronounced.

A pain of which nobody speaks to you, a pain which does not experience the least change from the lapse of days or years, and is susceptible of no event, no vicissitude is more cruel than a diversity of suffering. The Prince Castel-Forte, followed the common maxim, which advises us to do every thing to bring on oblivion; but there is no oblivion for persons of a strong imagination, and it is better to renew the same recollection incessantly, and so weary the soul with grief, than to oblige it to become concentrated in itself.

BOOK XIX.

*Oswald's return to Italy.*

CHAPTER I.

LET us now return to what passed in Scotland after the night of the fatal ball, when Corinna made so painful a sacrifice. Lord Nelville's servant gave him his letters during the entertainment, and he withdrew to read them. He opened several which were sent by his banker in London, before he came to that which de-

cided his fate; but when he perceived the hand of Corinna, when he saw these words, "*you are free,*" and discovered the ring which he had given her, he was seized at once with grief and indignation. For two months he had not heard from Corinna, and this silence was at length broken by words so laconic, and an action so decisive! He did not doubt her inconstancy; he recollected all that Lady Edgermond had said of her levity and changeable disposition, and entered into her prejudices against Corinna, whom he still loved sufficiently to be unjust. He forgot, that for several months he had entirely renounced the idea of espousing Corinna, and that Lucilia had excited a warm interest in his heart. He believed himself a man of sensibility, betrayed by a faithless woman; he felt sorrow, anger, and affliction, but above all, an emotion of pride which governed every other im-

pression, and inspired him with the desire of shewing himself superior to her who had abandoned him. We must not boast much of pride in the attachments of the heart; it hardly ever exists but when self-love triumphs over affection, and if Lord Nelville had loved Corinna as in the days of Rome and of Naples, resentment at wrongs, which he suspected, would not have so soon detached him from her.

Lady Edgermond perceived the trouble of Lord Nelville: she was a woman of a passionate soul, under a cold exterior; and the mortal disease with which she felt threatened, added to the ardour of her affection for her daughter. She knew that the poor girl loved Lord Nelville, and trembled at having compromised her happiness by letting him know it. She did not lose sight of Oswald a moment, and penetrated the secrets of his heart with a sagacity which is supposed to be peculiar

to the female mind, but which is only the natural effect of a keen and active attention, excited by a lively interest. She assumed for a pretext the affairs of Corinna, that is to say, the inheritance of her uncle, which she desired to transmit to her, to obtain an interview with Lord Nelville on the morrow; in this interview she soon perceived that he was dissatisfied with Corinna, and flattering her resentment with the idea of a noble revenge, she offered to acknowledge her as her daughter-in-law. Lord Nelville was astonished at this sudden change in the intentions of Lady Edgermond, but he comprehended, however, though this idea was in no manner expressed, that her offer would only be realized upon condition of his espousing Lucilia; and in one of those moments, when we act more quickly than we think, he asked her in marriage of her mother. Lady Edgermond enraptured, could hardly

contain herself sufficiently not to say yes too quickly—the consent was given, and Lord Nelville quitted the room, bound by an engagement which he had no idea of contracting when he entered it.

Whilst Lady Edgermond was preparing Lucilia to receive him, he took a walk in the garden, greatly agitated. He said to himself, that Lucilia had pleased him only because he was not much acquainted with her, and that he was fantastical in founding the happiness of his life upon the charm of a mystery which must one day necessarily be discovered. He felt an emotion of tenderness for Corinna, and he recollected the letters which he had written to her, and which too nearly explained to her the conflicts of his soul. “She has done right,” cried he “to renounce me. I had not the courage to render her happy; but surely it ought to

have cost her more to renounce me—then this line so cold—but who knows whether it has not been watered by her tears—and in pronouncing these words his own flowed in spite of himself. He was so carried away by these reveries that the domestics of Lady Edgermond could hardly find him, he had got to such a distance from the castle. They announced to him that the ladies awaited his presence, when astonished at his reluctance he hastened immediately to join them.

On entering the room, he saw Lucilia on her knees, with her face concealed in her mother's bosom ; she discovered in this situation the most affecting grace. As soon as she heard Lord Nelville's voice, she lifted up her head, her countenance bathed in tears, and said to him as she stretched out her hand :—"Is it not true, My Lord, that you do not mean to take me from my

mother.”—This amiable manner of expressing her consent greatly interested Oswald; he knelt down in his turn, and besought Lady Edgermond to permit Lucilia’s face to incline towards his, and it was in this situation that the innocent fair received the first impression of maturer years. A deep crimson covered her features—Oswald felt as he beheld her, how pure and sacred was the tie he had just formed, and the beauty of Lucilia, ravishing as it was at this moment, made still less impression on him than her celestial modesty.

The days which preceded the Sunday fixed upon for the ceremony, passed in the necessary arrangements for the marriage. Lucilia during this time did not speak more than usual; but what she said was noble and simple, and Lord Nelville loved and approved every one of her words. He, however, felt a void in her company :

their conversation consisted always in question and answer; she neither provoked nor prolonged it; it was well enough, but he missed that inexhaustible life, and vivacity which it is hard to dispense with when once we have enjoyed it. Lord Nelville then recollected Corinna; but as he no longer heard her spoken of, he hoped that this remembrance would become a chimera, an object merely of vague regret.

Lucilia on learning from her mother that her sister was still living in Italy, felt a strong desire to question Lord Nelville concerning her; but Lady Edgermond had forbidden her, and Lucilia, according to her usual way, submitted to her will without asking the motive of it. On the morning of the wedding-day, the image of Corinna was present to Oswald with more vivid semblance than ever; and he

was terrified at the impression it made on him. But he addressed himself in prayer to his father—he told him from the bottom of his heart that it was for his sake, that it was to obtain his benediction in Heaven that he accomplished his will upon earth. Emboldened by these sentiments, he arrived at Lady Edgermond's, and reproached himself with the wrong he had done Lucilia in his mind. When he saw her, she appeared so charming, that an angel descending upon earth could not choose a figure more calculated to give mortals an idea of ethereal virtues. They proceeded to the altar. The mother experienced an emotion still more profound than that of her daughter; for it was blended with the kind of fear which a serious resolution always incites in those who know life. Lucilia felt nothing but hope; in her, infancy was blended with youth, and joy with

love. On returning from the altar, she leaned timidly on Oswald's arm, secure of her protector. Oswald looked at her with tenderness, and one would have said that he felt at the bottom of his heart an enemy who threatened the happiness of Lucilia, and from whom he promised to defend her.

Lady Edgermond, on her return to the castle, said to her son-in-law:—"Now, my mind is easy; I have entrusted to you the happiness of Lucilia: I have so short a time longer to live, that it is soothing to my heart to feel my place so well supplied."—Lord Nelville was greatly affected at these words, and reflected, with as much emotion as disquietude, on the duties which they imposed on him. A few days had elapsed, and Lucilia had scarcely begun to lift her timid looks to Lord Nelville, and to assume that confidence

which might induce her to disclose her thoughts to him without reserve, when unfortunate incidents came to disturb this union, which had announced itself at first under more favorable auspices.

CHAP. II.

MR. DICKSON arrived on a visit to the new-married couple, and apologized for not having been present at the wedding, relating to them that he had been some time ill from a shock he had received from a violent fall: in speaking of this fall, he said he had been succoured by the most captivating woman in the world. Oswald was at this moment playing at shuttlecock with Lucilia. He was occupied in admiring the graceful attitudes of his playmate, and had not heard Mr. Dickson's story, when the latter called to him from

one end of the room to the other, saying:—“My Lord, the beautiful unknown has certainly heard talk of you; for she asked me a great many questions about you.”—“Of whom do you speak?” answered Lord Nelville, continuing his sport.—“Of a very charming woman,” said Mr. Dickson, “though to be sure she seemed to be greatly altered by affliction—a woman who could not speak of you without emotion.” These words attracted the attention of Lord Nelville, and he approached Mr. Dickson, beseeching him to repeat them. Lucilia, who had taken no notice of what had been said, went to join her mother, who called her. Oswald found himself alone with Mr. Dickson, and asked him who this woman was of whom he had just spoken. “I only know, from her pronunciation, that she is English;” answered he, “but I have rarely seen among our women, a female of such

obliging manners and such easy conversation: she paid as much attention to a poor old man like me, as if she had been my daughter, and during the time I passed with her, I was insensible to the contusions I had received. But my dear Oswald, have you then been an inconstant in England, as you were in Italy? for my charming benefactress turned pale and trembled in pronouncing your name.”—“Just heavens! of whom do you speak? an English woman, say you?”—“Yes, certainly,” answered Mr. Dickson, “you know that foreigners never pronounce our language without an accent.”—“And her countenance?”—“Oh! the most expressive I ever saw; though indeed she was so pale and so thin, that it was painful to look at her.”—This description did not accord with the brilliant Corinna; but might she not be ill? Must she not have suffered greatly if she had come to Eng-

land and not found him she was in search of? Oswald was suddenly struck with these fears, and continued his questions with the most lively disquietude.—Mr. Dickson repeated to him, that the fair unknown, spoke with a grace and an elegance which he had never met with in any other woman, that an expression of benignity, more than earthly, was painted in her looks; but she seemed languid and melancholy. Such was not the wonted appearance of Corinna; but once more, might she not have been altered by sorrow?—“Of what colour was her eyes and her hair?” said Lord Nelville.—“Of the finest black.”—Lord Nelville grew pale.—“Is she animated in speaking?”—“No,” continued Mr. Dickson, “She said some words from time to time, to interrogate and to answer me; but what she uttered had many charms.” He was about to proceed, when Lady Edgermond and

Lucilia entered : he was silent, and Lord Nelville ceased to question him, but fell into the most profound reverie and went out to walk, till he might have an opportunity of finding Mr. Dickson again alone.

Lady Edgermond, who had been struck with the sadness of Nelville, sent away Lucilia to ask Mr. Dickson if any thing had passed in their conversation to afflict her son-in-law, when he related to her ingenuously all that had transpired. Lady Edgermond guessed the truth in a moment, and shuddered at the thought of what Oswald's feelings would be, did he know that Corinna had come to Scotland in search of him ; she therefore easily foreseeing that he would interrogate Mr. Dickson afresh, tutored the latter in the answer he should make to divert Lord Nelville's suspicions. In effect, upon a se-

cond conversation, Mr. Dickson did not augment his disquietude in this respect ; but he was far from dissipating it, and the first idea of Oswald was to ask his domestic whether all the letters he had remitted to him for three weeks past, had come by the post, and whether he did not recollect having received one by another channel. The servant answered in the negative ; but as he was leaving the room, he turned back and said to Lord Nelville : “ I believe, however, that on the night of the ball, a blindman gave me a letter for your Lordship ; but I suppose it was to ask alms.”—“ A blind man ?” said Oswald, “ No, I have not received any letter from him ; could you find him out for me ?”—“ Yes, very easily,” answered the servant, “ he lives here in the village.”—“ Go, and fetch him,” said Lord Nelville, and unable to await patiently the arrival of the

blind man, he went before, and met him at the end of the avenue.—“ My friend,” said he to him, “ somebody gave you a letter for me on the night of the ball at the castle, do you know who it was ?”—“ My Lord, how can I tell ? you see that I am blind.”—“ Do you think it was a woman ?”—“ Yes, my Lord, for in spite of her grief, I could remark that her voice was very soft and gentle.”—In spite of her grief, do you say ?”—“ Yes, my Lord, I heard her weep ?”—“ Ah ! she wept,” said Oswald, “ and what did she say ?”—“ *You will give this letter to Oswald’s servant, good old man,*” then correcting herself directly, she added, “ *to Lord Nelville’s servant.*”—“ Oh Corinna !” cried Oswald, and leant on the old man, for he was ready to drop.—“ My Lord,” continued the blind man, “ I was sitting at the foot of a tree when she gave me this message ; I wished to deliver it directly,

but as an old man like me, cannot get up very easily, she condescended to help me herself, and gave me more money than I had had for a long time, and I felt her hand tremble as she supported me, just as your's does now, my Lord."—"It is enough," said Lord Nelville, "hold good old man, there is money for you, as she gave you some too, pray for us both."—He then departed.

From that moment a dreadful alarm seized his soul; he made vain inquiries in every quarter, and could not conceive how it was possible that Corinna had arrived in Scotland without asking to see him; he tormented himself in a thousand ways as to the motives of her conduct, and the affliction which he felt was so great, that in spite of his efforts to conceal it, Lady Edgermond, and even Lucilia perceived his unhappiness. It was

at this time that Lord Nelville wrote the first letter to the Prince Castel-Forte, which the latter did not think proper to shew Corinna, though it would certainly have affected her from the profound uneasiness it expressed.

The Count d'Erfeuil returned to Plymouth, whither he had conducted Corinna before the answer of the Prince Castel-Forte had arrived : He did not tell Lord Nelville all that he knew concerning Corinna, and yet he was sorry that it should not be known that he was in possession of an important secret, and discreet enough to keep it. His insinuations, which at first had not struck Lord Nelville, awakened his attention as soon as he thought they regarded Corinna ; he then eagerly interrogated the Count d'Erfeuil, who now, that he had gratified his vanity, in causing himself to be questioned, defended his secret pretty well.

Nevertheless, Oswald at length drew from him the whole history of Corinna, by the pleasure which the Count took in relating all that he had done for her; the sense of acknowledgment she had shewn, and the dreadful state of grief and despair in which he had found her. He gave this recital without perceiving the least in the world, the effect which it produced on Lord Nelville, having no other object than to be, as the English say, "*The hero of his own story.*" When the Count had left off speaking, he was really afflicted at the mischief he had done. Oswald had contained himself till then; but, on a sudden, he became wild with grief; he accused himself of being the most barbarous and perfidious of mankind; he represented to himself the devotion, the tenderness of Corinna, her generosity in the moment when she must have thought

him the most guilty of men, and to this he opposed the unfeeling neglect with which he had repaid her. He repeated to himself incessantly, that nobody could ever love him as she had done, and that he would one day be punished for the cruelty he had exercised towards her: he wished to set out for Italy, were it only to see her for a day or an hour, but Rome and Flanders were already occupied by the French: his regiment was about to embark, and he could not quit it without dishonour; he could not pierce the heart of his wife and repair the injuries he committed by other injuries. In fact, he was about to brave the danger of war, and this thought rendered him calm.

It was in this disposition that he wrote the second letter to the Prince Castel-Forte, which the latter determined also not to shew to Corinna. The answers of Corinna's friend described her sad but re-

signed, and as he was proud and wounded in her, he softened rather than exaggerated her wretched situation. Lord Neville then thought he ought not to torment her with his regret after having rendered her unhappy by his love, and he embarked for the West-India Islands, with a sentiment of grief and remorse which rendered life insupportable to him.

CHAP. III.

LUCILIA was afflicted at the departure of Oswald ; but the melancholy silence which he had observed towards her during the last period of their abode, had so redoubled her natural timidity, that she could not determine to tell him that she was pregnant, a circumstance which he only learnt in the West Indies by a letter of Lady Edgermond, from whom her daughter had concealed it till then. Lord Nelville now thought the parting of Lucilia very cold ; he did not form a right judgment of what passed in her soul, and

comparing her silent grief with the eloquent terror of Corinna, on their separation at Venice, he did not hesitate to believe that Lucilia's love was feeble ; notwithstanding she did not enjoy a day's happiness during the four years of his absence. Hardly could the birth of a daughter divert her attention a moment from the dangers which her husband ran ; another source of chagrin was also joined to this disquietude—she had gradually discovered all that concerned Corinna, and her connexion with Lord Nelville.

The Count d'Erfeuil, who passed nearly a twelvemonth in Scotland, and often saw Lucilia and her mother, was strongly persuaded that he had not revealed the secret of Corinna's journey to England ; but he said so many things that related to it, it was so difficult for him when conversation languished not to bring up the subject

which so warmly interested Lucilia, that at length she learnt the whole: innocent as she was, she possessed sufficient art, and it did not require much, to extract it from the Count.

Lady Edgermond, whose illness became every day more and more serious, had not suspected the labour which her daughter took to learn what must cause her so much pain; but when she beheld her sad and thoughtful, she obtained her confidence on the subject of her grief. Lady E. expressed herself with great severity on the step Corinna had taken in coming to England. Lucilia received a different impression: she was by turns jealous of Corinna, and dissatisfied with Oswald, who had behaved so cruelly to one who loved him so well; and she thought her own happiness insecure in the care of a man who had destroyed that of another. She had always cherished a warm affec-

tion, blended with gratitude, for her sister, which augmented the pity her present situation was so calculated to inspire, and far from being flattered with the sacrifice which Oswald had made, she was tormented with the idea that she had only been chosen by him, because her rank in life rendered her more desirable; she recollected his hesitation before marriage, and his sadness a few days afterwards, and every circumstance confirmed her in the cruel thought that her husband did not love her. Lady E. might have rendered her a great service, had she endeavoured to tranquillize her mind; but she was without indulgence, and having no idea of any thing but duty, and the sentiments which it permits, she pronounced an anathema upon all that went beyond that line. She thought not of using delicate precautions towards Lucilia in

her present state of mind; but on the contrary, she imagined that the only way of awakening remorse in Oswald, was by shewing resentment: she partook too warmly of the disquietude of her daughter, became indignant at the thought that so charming a person was not duly appreciated by her husband, and far from using any soothing art to persuade her that she was more beloved than she thought, confirmed her fears in order to rouse her pride. Lucilia more gentle, more enlightened than her mother, did not rigorously follow the counsels she gave her; but still did not wholly neglect them, and her letters to Lord Nelville exhibited much less tenderness and sensibility than she felt at the bottom of her heart.

Oswald, all this time distinguished himself in the war by most astonishing acts of bravery; he exposed his life a thousand

times, not only from the enthusiasm of honour, but from a fondness of danger. It was remarked, that peril seemed to him a pleasure; that he appeared more gay, more animated, and more happy than ever on the day of battle; he reddened with joy when the tumult of arms began, and at that moment the burthen which usually oppressed his heart, was taken off, and he could breathe freely. Adored by his soldiers, admired by his comrades, he enjoyed an active existence, which though it did not render him happy, at least made him insensible to the past and to the future. He received letters from his wife, the style of which appeared very cold, but to this he became accustomed. The remembrance of Corinna often came across his mind on these fine tropical nights, which convey to the soul so sublime an idea of nature and its author; but as the

climate and the war every day menaced his life, he believed himself less guilty, from being so near that death which he conceived would expiate his crime. We pardon our enemies when death threatens them; we feel also, in a similar situation, indulgence towards ourselves. Lord Neville only thought of the tears that Corinna would shed, when informed that he was no more; he forgot those which her wrongs had already caused her.

In the midst of these perils which inspire reflection on the uncertainty of human life, he thought considerably more of Corinna than of Lucilia; they had so often discoursed of death together; they had so often fathomed the most serious thoughts, that he fancied himself still conversing with her when occupied with those grand ideas which the habitual spectacle of war and its terrors gives birth to. It

was to her he addressed his mind when alone, notwithstanding he had reason to believe her so much irritated against him. There seemed to be a communication of soul between them, in spite of absence, in spite of infidelity itself; whilst the gentle Lucilia, whom he did not think offended with him, offered herself to his remembrance as an object of his protection, not demanding of him any serious and melancholy thought. At length the troops which Lord Nelville commanded were recalled to England—he returned, and already the tranquillity of the vessel pleased him less than the bustle of war. Exterior motion had replaced the pleasures of the imagination to which the conversation of Corinna had given him a relish. He had not yet tried the effects of repose away from her. He had made himself so beloved by his soldiers, and had inspired them with so much attachment and en-

thusiasm, that their homage and devotion to his person kept awake in his bosom, during the passage, the interest of a military life, which interest did not completely cease till they were disembarked.

CHAP. IV.

LORD NELVILLE then set out for the estate of Lady Edgermond in Northumberland ; he had been so long absent from his family that he felt as if about to form a new acquaintance with them. Lucilia presented to him her daughter, who was then more than three years of age, with as much timidity as one who had been guilty of any crime. The little cherub resembled Corinna ; for the imagination of Lucilia was greatly occupied with the idea of her sister during her pregnancy. Julietta,

so the sweet infant was called, had Corinna's hair and eyes: Lord Nelville in remarking it was troubled, and taking her in his arms, pressed her to his breast with the most ardent affection. Lucilia discovered nothing in this emotion but a tender recollection of Corinna, and, from that moment, she did not enjoy unmixed the extreme fondness of Lord Nelville for Julietta.

Lucilia was greatly improved during his absence. She was twenty years of age, her beauty had assumed a dignified tone, and inspired Lord Nelville with a sentiment of respect. Lady Edgermond was no longer able to quit her bed, and her situation had produced a great effect upon her spirits and temper. She however beheld Lord Nelville again with pleasure, for she had been greatly tormented by the fear of dying in his absence, and thus leaving her daughter alone in the world.

Oswald had become so habituated to an active life, that he felt it very irksome to remain the whole day in Lady Edgermond's chamber, who no longer received any body but her son-in-law and her daughter. Lucilia still tenderly loved her spouse, but had the exquisite grief to believe herself not beloved by him, and concealed from him, through a sense of pride, what she knew respecting his sentiments for Corinna and the jealousy they inspired her with. Her present constraint still added to her natural reserve, and rendered her more cold and taciturn than she had ever been. When her husband wished to give her advice on the charm she might give to conversation by appearing more animated, she fancied this advice proceeded from a recollection of Corinna, and was hurt rather than benefited by it. Lucilia was of a most gentle disposition; but her mother had given her positive

ideas on every point, and when Lord Nelville extolled the pleasures of the imagination and the blandishments of the fine arts, she always traced, in his observations, some recollections of Italy, and coldly repelled his enthousaism, because she thought Corinna was the source of it. In another disposition of mind, she would have treasured up the words of her husband with care, in order to study every means of pleasing him.

Lady Edgermond, whose illness increased her mental defects, shewed a growing antipathy for all that departed from her usual monotonous habit of life. She found evil in every thing, and her imagination, irritated by suffering, was offended at the most trifling circumstances, morally as well as physically. She wished to render existence as cheap as possible, perhaps that she might not so keenly regret what she was about to leave; but as none

tell the personal motives of their opinions, she founded hers upon the general principles of an exaggerated morality. She incessantly sought to strip life of every enchantment, by attaching a crime to the smallest pleasures, and by opposing duty to every employment of our hours, which might differ a little from that of the day before. Lucilia, who though in the habit of paying implicit obedience to her mother, possessed a more enlightened mind, and greater flexibility of character, would have joined her husband to combat gently the ever increasing austerity and importunity of Lady Edgermond, if the latter had not persuaded her that she adopted this conduct only to oppose Lord Nelville's *penchant* for Italy.—“It is necessary,” said she, “incessantly to struggle by the power of duty against so fatal an inclination.”—Lord Nelville had certainly

a very high respect for duty; but he regarded it in a more extensive point of view than his mother-in-law. He loved to revert to its first source; he believed it in perfect harmony with our real inclinations, and thought that it did not require of us continual sacrifices and continual conflicts. He conceived that virtue, far from being intended as a torment to life, contributed in such a manner to lasting happiness, that it might be considered as a sort of fore-knowledge, granted to man upon earth.

Sometimes Oswald, in unfolding his ideas, employed the expressions of Corinna; he listened to himself with pleasure, when he borrowed her language. Lady Edgermond appeared vexed when he indulged in this manner of thinking and speaking: new ideas are displeasing to aged persons: they love to persuade

themselves that the world has lost instead of gained since the days of their youth. Lucilia's heart told her that the lively interest, which Oswald seemed to take in his sentiments and opinions, was only the echo of his affection for Corinna; she cast down her eyes not to let her husband see what was passing in her soul, and he, not suspecting that she was in the least acquainted with his amour in Italy, attributed to his wife's coldness of disposition her inanimate silence, whilst he was speaking with warmth. Not knowing therefore where to find a soul in sympathy with his own, his regret at the past was renewed more keenly than ever, and he fell into a most profound melancholy. He wrote to the Prince Castel-Forte to make enquiries concerning Corinna. His letter did not reach the Prince on account of the war. His health suffered extremely from the climate of England, and the phy-

sicians repeated incessantly that, if he did not go and pass the winter in Italy, his lungs would be attacked afresh; but that was impracticable, because the peace was not made between France and England. Once he spoke before his mother-in-law of the advice of the physicians, and the obstacle that opposed its completion.—“And even when peace shall be made,” said Lady Edgermond, “I cannot suppose that you will allow yourself to revisit Italy.”—“If my Lord’s health require it,” interrupted Lucilia, “he will do well to go.”—This word appeared kind to Lord Nelville, and he hastened to testify his acknowledgement for it; but even this acknowledgement wounded her; it seemed like a design to prepare her for the voyage.

Peace was concluded in the spring, and the voyage to Italy became practicable. Every time that Lord Nelville let some

reflection escape him upon the bad state of his health, Lucilia was divided between the disquietude she felt, and fear that it was meant to insinuate the necessity of his passing the winter in Italy, and whilst her tender anxiety led her to exaggerate her husband's malady, her jealousy, which proceeded from the same source as the former sentiment, induced her to seek reasons for weakening what the physicians said of the danger he ran by remaining in England. Nelville attributed this conduct of Lucilia to indifference and selfishness, and they reciprocally wounded each others feelings, because they did not frankly declare their sentiments.

At length Lady Edgermond's situation became so alarming, that Lucilia and Oswald spoke of nothing but her malady.—The poor Lady lost her speech for a month before she died, and it was only

by her tears, or her mode of shutting her hand, that she could be understood. Lucilia was overwhelmed with affliction; Oswald, most sincerely affected, watched day and night by her bed side, and, as it was the month of November, he did himself great injury by the cares and attentions he lavished upon her. These testimonials of his affection made Lady Edgermond feel happy. The defects of her character disappeared in proportion as her dreadful situation might have rendered them excusable; so much does the approach of death tranquillize every agitation of the soul, and most defects of character only proceed from this agitation.

On the night of her death, she took the hand of Lucilia with that of Lord Neville, and, joining them together, pressed them both to her heart, then lifting her eyes to heaven, she appeared not to regret

the power of speech, which could not be more expressive than this action and this look. A few minutes after she expired.

Lord Nelville, who had exercised his utmost strength to conquer his own malady, that he might be better able to tend his mother-in-law, now fell dangerously ill, and the unfortunate Lucilia had to support this new affliction under the heavy calamity that had just befallen her. It appears, that in his delirium he often pronounced the name of Corinna and that of Italy. He often in his ravings demanded an *Italian sun, a southern climate*, a milder air—his disorder was an ague, and when the shivering fit came on, he would say, *it is so cold in the north that one can never get warm*. When come to himself, he was astonished to learn that Lucilia had prepared every thing for their voyage to Italy. When he expressed his surprize, she told him

that it was by the advice of his physicians. “If you will permit it,” said she, my daughter and I will accompany you: a child ought not to be separated either from its father or mother.” “Undoubtedly,” replied Lord Nelville, “we should not separate, but does this voyage give you pain? if so, I will renounce it.”—“No,” replied Lucilia, “it is not that which gives me pain.”—Lord Nelville seized her hand, and gazed tenderly upon her. She was about to explain herself farther, but the recollection of her mother, who had desired her never to let Oswald know the jealousy she felt, restrained her, and she resumed her speech with saying,—“You know, my Lord, that the first wish of my heart must be the re-establishment of your health.”—“You have a sister in Italy,” continued Lord Nelville.—“I know it,” replied Lucilia, “have you heard from her?”—“No,” said Lord Nel-

ville, “since I went to America I know not what has become of her.” “Well my Lord, we shall learn in Italy.”—“Does she interest you still?”—“Yes, my Lord,” answered Lucilia, “I have not forgotten the tenderness she shewed me in my infancy.”—“We should never be forgetful,” said Lord Nelville, with a sigh; and the silence of both finished the conversation.

Oswald was not going to Italy with the intention of renewing his connection with Corinna; he felt too much delicacy to let such an idea come near him; but should he not recover his health, he felt a pleasing emotion in the prospect of dying in Italy, and receiving in her last adieu the pardon of Corinna. He did not believe that Lucilia could be acquainted with the passion he had felt for her sister, much less did he suspect that in his delirium he had betrayed the regret which he still felt on that subject. He did not do justice to

the intellect of his wife ; because her mind was sterile and served her rather to divine the thoughts of others than to excite interest by what she thought herself.—Oswald was accustomed to consider her as a cold inanimate beauty, who scrupulously discharged her duty, and loved him as much as she was capable of loving ; but he did not know the sensibility of Lucia, which she took the greatest pains to conceal. It was through pride that she dissimulated the cause of her present affliction ; but in happier circumstances, she would have reproached herself with testifying a warm affection even for her husband. She thought it a violation of modesty to express any passionate sentiment ; but as she was nevertheless susceptible of these sentiments, her education by imposing on her the duty of restraining them, had rendered her melancholy and

taciturn ; she was well convinced that she ought not to reveal what she felt ; but she took no pleasure in speaking of any thing else.

CHAP. V.

LORD NELVILLE dreaded the recollections which France would bring to his mind; he therefore traversed it rapidly; for as Lucilia in this journey testified neither desire nor will in any thing, it was all at his direction. They arrived at the foot of the mountains which separate Dauphiny from Savoy, and ascended on foot what is called the *pas des échelles*; which is a road worn in the rock, the entrance of which resembles that of a deep cavern; it is completely dark from beginning to end, even

during the finest days of summer. It was then the beginning of December, no snow had yet fallen; but autumn, the season of decay, approached to a conclusion, and gave place to winter. The whole road was covered with dead leaves which the wind had brought thither, for there existed no trees in this rocky way, and near the wrecks of decayed nature no branches were seen, the hope of the following year. The sight of the mountains was pleasing to Lord Nelville; the plains seem to have no other object than to maintain man; but picturesque countries bear the stamp of the Creator and his omnipotence. Man however has every where become familiar with nature, and the roads, which he has cut, climb the mountains and descend the abysses. To him there is no longer any thing inaccessible but the mystery of himself.

On entering the Maurienne, winter became more rigorous at every step. Advancing towards Mount Cenis was like approaching the north, and Lucilia, who had never travelled before, was terrified by those glaciers which render the feet of the horses unsteady. She concealed her fears from Oswald ; but often reproached herself for having brought her child with her, and she frequently asked herself whether the most perfect morality had dictated this resolution, and whether her extreme fondness for Julietta, and the idea that she was more interesting to Oswald when accompanied by her child, had not made her insensible to the perils of a long journey. Lucilia was of a most timorous disposition, and frequently offered violence to her soul by secret and scrupulous examinations of her conduct. The more virtuous we are, the more our delicacy in-

creases, and with it uneasiness of conscience; Lucilia had no refuge against this disposition but piety, and only derived tranquillity from long internal prayer.

As they advanced towards Mount Cenis, all nature seemed to assume a more terrible character; the snow fell in abundance upon the ground already covered with snow, and the travellers might have supposed that they were entering the icy hell so well described by Dante. All the productions of the earth now offered a monotonous aspect from the depth of precipices to the summit of mountains; a sameness of colour caused all the varieties of vegetation to disappear; the rivers flowed still at the foot of the mountains; but the fir trees clad in white, and reflected in the waters, were like the spectres of trees. Oswald and Lucilia beheld this spectacle in silence; for speech seems a

stranger to this frozen scene of nature, and we naturally join in its silence; but on a sudden they perceived upon a vast plain of snow, a long train of men clad in black, who were carrying a corpse to the grave. These priests, the only living beings which appear in the midst of this cold and desert plain, walked in a slow pace, which the rigor of the season ought to have hastened, if the thought of death had not imprinted gravity on every step. The mourning of nature of man, of vegetation, and of human life; these two colours of black and white, which alone struck the eye, filled the soul with affright. Lucilia said in a low voice,—“What a melancholy omen!” — “Lucilia,” interrupted Oswald, “believe me, it is not for you.” — Alas! thought he, within himself, it was not under such sad auspices that I travelled in Italy with Corinna—what is become of her now? Do all these mournful objects, that

surround me, announce that I am about to suffer? Lucilia was overwhelmed with the disquietude which this journey caused her. Oswald had no idea of that terror which she felt, and which is quite foreign to the manly bosom, particularly to one so intrepid as his. Lucilia took this unconsciousness of what she felt for indifference. However, every thing conspired to increase the alarm of Lucilia: the common people find a species of satisfaction in magnifying danger in which their imagination is most active, and they take pleasure in terrifying people of another class. In traversing Mount Cenis during winter, the travellers and the inn-keepers give you every instant an account of the passage of the *Mount*, so they call it, and one would suppose that they are speaking of an immoveable monster, guardian of the vallies, which conduct to the promised land. They observe the weather to see if

there be any thing to fear, and when the wind called the *Torment* is apprehended, they strongly advise you not to tempt the dangers of the mountain. This wind is first denoted in the sky by a white cloud which extends throughout the air like a sheet, and a few hours after the whole horizon is darkened with it.

Lucilia had taken every possible information respecting these matters unknown to Lord Nelville, who had no suspicion of the terrors above mentioned, and abandoned himself entirely to those reflections which his return to Italy gave birth to. Lucilia, who was more concerned at the object of the journey than the journey itself, formed melancholy forebodings of every thing they should meet with, and secretly blamed Lord Nelville for his perfect security as to the safety of his wife and daughter. On the morning when they were to cross Mount Cenis, se-

veral peasants gathered round Lucilia, and told her that the sky threatened the *Torment*, nevertheless those who were to carry her and her daughter, declared there was nothing to fear; Lucilia looked at Lord Nelville, she saw that he despised the fear with which they sought to inspire him, and wounded afresh by this courage, she hastened their departure. Oswald did not perceive the sentiment which had dictated this resolution, and followed on horse-back the litter upon which was carried his wife and daughter. They ascended the Mount with tolerable ease. But when they had reached the middle of the plain that separates the ascent from the declivity, a terrible hurricane arose, whirlpools of snow blinded the conductors, and several times Lucilia no longer perceived Oswald, whom the tempest had involved in its violent mists. The venerable monks, who upon the summit of the

Alps consecrate themselves to the preservation of travellers, began to sound their alarm-bells ; and though this signal announces the pity of benevolent men, the sound in itself had something very gloomy, and the strokes precipitated from the brass, expressed rather terror than assistance.

Lucilia hoped that Oswald would propose to pass the night at the convent ; but as she did not express her desire, he thought it better to hasten the termination of their journey before the close of day.—The bearers of Lucilia asked her with disquietude, if they should begin the descent ? “ Yes,” said she, “ Since my Lord does not forbid it.” Lucilia was in the wrong not to express her fears, since her daughter was with her ; but when we love and do not believe our love returned, every moment of our life is a pain, and almost a humiliation. Oswald remained on horse-

back, though that was the most dangerous mode of descending; but he thought that so he would be more certain not to lose sight of his wife and daughter.

The moment Lucilia saw, from the summit of the Mount, the road that descends from it, and which would be taken for a precipice itself, if the abysses on each side did not shew the difference, she pressed her daughter to her heart with the most lively emotion. Oswald remarked it, and leaving his horse, he went himself to assist the bearers to carry the litter.—There was so much grace in all Oswald did, that Lucilia seeing the zeal and interest with which he watched over her and Julietta felt her eyes moist with tears; but immediately there arose a gust of wind, so terrible, that the bearers of the litter themselves, fell on their knees, exclaiming, “*Lord save us!*” Then Luci-

lia summoned up all her courage, and rising, stretched her arms to give Julietta to Lord Nelville, saying to him: "My love, take your daughter."—Oswald took her saying: "and you too Lucilia, I can carry you both."—"No," answered she, "only save your daughter."—"How *save*?" said Nelville, "is there any danger then?" and turning towards the bearers, he exclaimed,—"Wretches! why did you not tell me—."—"They did warn me of it," interrupted Lucilia—"and you concealed it from me," said Lord Nelville, "what have I done to merit such a cruel silence?" In uttering these words, he wrapped up his daughter in his cloak, and fixed his eyes on the ground in profound anxiety; but heaven, to protect Lucilia, caused a ray to appear which penetrated the clouds, appeased the storm, and discovered to the eyes of the travellers, the fertile plains of Piedmont.

In an hour the whole caravan arrived without any accident at Novalaise, the first Italian town beyond Mount Cenis.

On entering the inn, Lucilia took her daughter in her arms, went up stairs to a room, and kneeling down, returned thanks to God with fervor. Oswald, whilst she was at prayer, was leaning against the chimney in a pensive attitude, and when his wife arose, he stretched his hand to her, saying, "Lucilia, you were frightened then?"—"Yes, my love," said she:—"And why did you set out?"—"You seemed impatient to depart."—"Do you not know," answered Lord Nelville, "that the possibility of danger or pain to you, would with me have superseded every other consideration?"—"It is the danger of Julietta that you should fear," said Lucilia.—She took her on her knees to warm her at the fire, and dress with her hands the fine black hair of her child, which the

snow and the rain had platted on her forehead. In this moment the mother and daughter were most charming to view, Oswald gazed upon them tenderly; but once more silence suspended a conversation which might have led to a happy explanation.

They arrived at Turin; this year the winter was extremely rigorous; the vast apartments of Italy are destined to receive the sun, and they appear desert during the cold weather. Men appear very little beneath these great vaults. They are pleasant during summer from their coolness; but in the midst of winter nothing is felt but the void of these immense palaces, whose possessors seem pigmies in the abode of giants.

The death of Alfieri had just been announced, which event was consecrated by a general mourning among all Italians, who felt proud of their native country.—

Lord Nelville thought he saw every where the aspect of sadness; he no longer felt that impression which Italy had formerly produced on him. The absence of her whom he had so much loved, stripped nature and the arts of their enchantment.—He enquired after Corinna at Turin, where he was informed that she had not published any thing for five years, and that she lived in the most profound retirement, but he was assured, that she resided at Florence. He resolved to go thither, not to remain there and so betray the affection of Lucilia, but to explain to Corinna how he had been ignorant of her journey to Scotland.

In traversing the plains of Lombardy, Oswald cried: “Oh! how beautiful was this scene, when all the elms were covered with leaves, and the green vines bound them together!”—Lucilia said within herself, “it was beautiful when Corinna was

with him."—A humid mist, such as often takes place in those plains traversed by such a number of rivers, obscured the sight of the country. During the night was heard on the roof of the inns, those abundant rains of the south, which resemble a deluge. The houses are penetrated with them, and the water pursues the inhabitants every where with the activity of fire. Lucilia sought in vain the charm of Italy: one would have said, every thing conspired to conceal Italy with a sombre veil from her eyes, and from those of Oswald.

CHAP. VI.

OSWALD since he had been in Italy had not pronounced a word of Italian—this language seemed painful to him to hear as well as to speak. On the evening of that day, when Lady Nelville and he were arrived at the inn in Milan, they heard a knock at their door, and presently a Roman entered the room, of a very dark countenance, the lines of which were strongly marked, but did not form true physiognomy; the features were formed to convey expression, but wanted the soul to give it, and this countenance was

perpetually adorned with a pleasing smile, and a look somewhat poetical. The moment he entered the door, he began to recite extempore verses, filled with praises on the mother, the infant, and the spouse; of those praises which are equally applicable to every mother, to every child, and to every spouse in the world, and whose exaggeration exceeded all bounds, as if words and truth were incompatible with each other. The Roman however made use of those harmonious sounds which have so many charms in the Italian; he declaimed with an energy which made the insignificance of what he said more remarkable. Nothing could be more painful to Oswald than to hear thus, for the first time after a long interval, a language so dear to him; thus to find his recollections travestied, and to feel an impression of sadness renewed by a ridiculous object. Lucilia perceived the cruel situation of

Oswald's soul, she wished to stop the improvisator; but it was impossible to be heard by him—he walked the room with long strides, and made continual exclamations and continual gestures, not at all conscious of the pain he gave his auditors. His motion was like that of a machine which is wound up, and is not stopt till a certain time; at length this time arrived, and Lady Nelville got rid of him.

When he was gone, Oswald said:—
“Poetical language is so easy to parody, that it ought to be forbidden all those who are not worthy of speaking it.”—“It is true,” replied Lucilia, perhaps a little too dryly, “it is true that nothing could be more painful than to have what we love brought to our mind by language like that we have just heard.”—This observation wounded Lord Nelville. “Far from that,” said he, “methinks that such a contrast

shews the power of genius. It is the same language so miserably degraded, which became celestial poetry in the mouth of your sister. Lucilia was in a manner thunderstruck by those words: the name of Corinna had not been pronounced by Oswald during the whole voyage, still less that of *your sister*, which seemed to indicate a reproach. She was almost suffocated with her tears, and had she yielded to her emotion, perhaps this moment would have been the sweetest of her life; but she suppressed it, and the constraint which subsisted between her and her husband only became more painful.

The next day the sun appeared brilliant and radiant, notwithstanding the bad weather which had preceded; he seemed an exile returned to his native country.—Lucilia and Lord Nelville profited by this to go and see the cathedral of Milan,

which is the chief d'œuvre of Gothic architecture in Italy, as St. Peters is of the modern. This church, built in the form of a cross, is a fine image of grief rising above the rich and joyous city of Milan. In ascending to the top of the steeple, we are confounded at the labour bestowed on the most trifling parts of the workmanship. The whole edifice from top to bottom, is ornamented, sculptured, and figured, as the smallest article of taste might be. What time and patience it must have required to accomplish such a work! Perseverance towards the same object was formerly transmitted through generations; and the human race, stable in their thoughts, raised monuments equally immoveable. A Gothic church gives birth to very religious dispositions of mind: Horace Walpole said, “ *that the Popes have consecrated to the building of modern temples, the riches produced by that devotion which*

Gothic churches have inspired." The light which passes through the painted windows, the singular forms of the architecture, the whole aspect of the church, in fact, is a silent image of that mystery of the Infinite which we feel within us, without ever being able either to free ourselves from, or to comprehend it.

Lucilia and Lord Nelville quitted Milan on a day when the ground was covered with snow ; and nothing is so sad as snow in Italy. We are not accustomed to behold there all nature disappear beneath the uniform veil of frost : all the Italians are afflicted at bad weather, as at any public calamity. In travelling with Lucilia, Oswald felt for Italy a sort of coquetry which was not satisfied ; winter is there more displeasing than any where else, because the imagination is not prepared for it. Lord and Lady Nelville traversed Parma, Placentia, and Modena. The

churches and palaces of these places are too vast in proportion to the number and richness of the inhabitants. One would say that these cities are calculated for the reception of great lords who are expected, but who have sent some of their train before.

On the morning of that day when Lord and Lady Nelville proposed to cross the Taro, as if every thing was to contribute to render the tour of Italy mournful upon this occasion, the river had overflowed the preceding night. The inundation of those rivers, which descend from the Alps and the Appenines, is very dreadful. We hear them growl at a distance like thunder, and their course is so rapid, that the waves, and the noise which announces them, arrive almost at the same time. To raise a bridge over any of these rivers is hardly practicable, for they change their bed incessantly, and rise considerably

above the level of the plain. Oswald and Lucilia found themselves suddenly stopped on the banks of this river ; the boats had been carried away by the current, and they were obliged to wait till the Italians, a people who are not fond of hurrying themselves, could bring them back to the new shore which the torrent had formed. Lucilia, during this time walked about pensive and almost frozen, the fog was such that the waves were blended with the horizon, and this spectacle brought to mind, rather the poetical descriptions of the borders of Styx, than those benign waters which ought to charm the eyes of a people burnt by the rays of the sun. Lucilia feared for her daughter the rigor of the cold, and took her into a fisherman's hut, where the fire was lighted in the middle of the room, as in Russia.—“ Where then is your beautiful Italy ?” said Lucilia, smiling, to Lord Nelville.—“ I know not when

I shall behold it again!" answered he, sadly.

In approaching Parma, and all the cities upon this road, we perceive at a distance the picturesque view of roofs in the form of a terrace, which give Italian cities an Oriental appearance. The steeples rise out of these platforms, and when we return to the north, those pointed roofs, which are so formed to defend them from the snow, produce a very disagreeable impression. Parma still preserves some *chefs d'œuvre* of Correggio, and Lord Nelville conducted Lucilia to a church, where is to be seen a painting in fresco by him, called the *Mudona della Scala*. It is covered by a curtain. When this curtain was drawn, Lucilia took Julietta to shew her the picture, and at this moment the attitude of the mother and child happened by chance to be the same with that of the Virgin and her Son. The countenance of Lucilia

bore such a resemblance to the idea of modesty and grace, which Correggio has painted, that Oswald alternately directed his eyes from the picture to Lucilia, and from Lucilia to the picture. She remarked it, cast down her eyes, and the resemblance became still more striking; for Correggio is perhaps the only painter who could give the eyes, when cast down, an expression as penetrating as when turned towards heaven. The veil which he casts over the looks, neither conceals the sentiment nor the thought, but gives them an additional charm, that of a celestial mystery.

This Madonna is almost loosened from the wall, and we behold the colour almost trembling, which a breath might blow down. This gives to the picture that melancholy charm which attaches to all that is fleeting, and we cannot help re-

turning several times to bid its departing beauty a last adieu.

On leaving the church, Oswald said to Lucilia:—"in a short time this picture will no longer exist, but I shall always have its model before my eyes.—These charming words affected Lucilia; she squeezed the hand of Oswald; she was ready to ask him whether her heart could depend upon this expression of tenderness; but when a word of Oswald seemed cold, her pride hindered her from complaining, and when a kind expression made her happy, she was fearful of disturbing this momentary felicity, by endeavouring to render it more durable.—Thus her mind and her soul always furnished motives for silence. She flattered herself that time, resignation, and silence, would bring about the fortunate day which would dissipate all her fears.

CHAP. VII.

THE health of Lord Nelville was meliorated by the climate of Italy ; but a cruel uneasiness incessantly agitated him : he every where sought news of Corinna, and was every where answered as at Turin, that to the best of their belief she was at Florence ; but that they had heard nothing of her since she had left off writing and seeing any body. Oh ! such was not the way that the name of Corinna used to be announced formerly, and could he who

had destroyed her happiness ever forgive himself?

In approaching Bologna, we are struck at a distance by two very high towers, of which one in particular, inclines in a manner that terrifies the beholder. In vain do we know that it was so built, and that it has thus beheld the succession of ages, the imagination is scared by its aspect. Bologna is one of those cities where we find the most learned men of every description ; but the people here produce a disagreeable impression. Lucilia expecting to hear that harmonious Italian language for which she had been prepared, the Bolognese dialect must have painfully surprized her; for there is not one more hoarse in the northern countries. It was in the middle of carnival that Oswald and Lucilia arrived at Bologna ; they heard day and night cries of joy, resembling those of rage. A population, like that of

the lazzaroni of Naples, sleep by night beneath the numerous arches which skirt the streets of Bologna; they carry in their hands, during winter, an earthen vessel with fire in it; they eat in the street, and pursue foreigners with incessant cravings. Lucilia expected in vain those melodious voices which are heard by night in the Italian cities; they are all silent when the weather is cold, and are replaced at Bologna by clamours which terrify those who are not accustomed to them.

The jargon of the people is so rude, that their accents appear to breathe hostility, and the manners of the populace are more gross in some southern countries than in the north. A sedentary life tends to perfect social order; but that sky which permits a people to live in the street, introduces something savage into their habits. (11).

Oswald and Lady Nelville, could not take a step without being assailed by a quantity of beggars, who are the scourge of Italy. In passing before the prisons of Bologna, which look upon the street, their inhabitants abandon themselves to the most disgusting joy. They address the passengers in a voice of thunder, and ask aid with ignoble pleasantries and immoderate laughter; in fact every thing here gives the idea of a nation without dignity.—“It is not thus in England,” said Lucilia “our independent people present a different picture : Oswald, can such a country as this please you ?”—“God forbid,” answered Oswald, “that ever I should renounce my native country, but when we have passed the Apennines, you will hear the Tuscan language spoken ; you will behold the true character of Italy ; you will know this intellectual and animated people, and

will then, I believe, think with less severity of Italy."

We may form judgments of Italy widely different, according to circumstances. Sometimes the evil that has been said of it accords with what we see, and at others it appears superlatively unjust. In a country where the greater part of the governments were without security, and the empire of opinion almost annihilated, as well for the higher, as for the lower classes; in a country where religion pays more regard to forms of worship than to morality, there is little good to be said of the nation, considered in a general point of view, but many private qualities deserve our attention. It is the adventitious effect of individual relation, which inspires travellers with satire, or panegyric; the persons of whom we have a particular knowledge determine the judgment that is given of a

nation, a judgment which can find no fixed basis, either in the public manners, or the public mind."

Oswald and Lucilia went together to view the fine collections of pictures which are at Bologna. Oswald in surveying them, stopped a long time before the Sybil of Dominiquino. Lucilia remarked the interest which this painting excited in him, and seeing him quite absorbed in the contemplation of it, she at length ventured to approach, and asked him, timidly, whether the Sybil of Dominiquino spoke more powerfully to his heart, than the Madona of Correggio. Oswald comprehended Lucilia, and was astonished at all this word imported—he beheld her some time without returning any answer, and then said to her :—"The oracles of the Sybil are dumb—her genius and her talents are no more; but the angelical figure of Correggio has lost none of its charms, and the unhappy

man, who has done so much injury to the one, will never betray the other.”—In finishing these words, he went out to conceal his emotion.

BOOK XX.

*Conclusion.*

CHAPTER I.

AFTER what had passed in the gallery of Bologna, Oswald comprehended that Lucia knew more of his correspondence with Corinna than he had imagined, and at last it occurred to him that her coldness and silence proceeded perhaps from some secret pain ; this time however it was he who feared the explanation which till then

Lucilia had dreaded. The ice being broken, she would have disclosed her feelings to Lord Nelville, had he desired it; but it was painful to him to speak of Corinna at the moment he was about to see her again, to converse on a subject, in fact, which would so powerfully affect him with her in whose presence he always felt restraint, and of whose character he had yet but an imperfect knowledge.

They traversed the Apennines, and found beyond them the beautiful climate of Italy. The sea wind which is so stifling in summer then spread a gentle heat; the grass was green; autumn scarcely finished, the spring began to appear. The markets were crowded with oranges, pomegranates, and fruit of every kind; the Tuscan language began to be heard; every pleasing recollection of Italy rushed upon the mind of Oswald; but they were not blended with any future hope, nothing

but the past employed his thoughts. The suavity of a southern climate produced its effect also upon the disposition of Lucilia: she would have been more confiding, more animated, if Lord Nelville had encouraged her; but they were both restrained by a similar timidity, dissatisfied with the disposition of each other, and not daring to communicate their mutual feelings. Corinna, in such a situation would soon have obtained the secret of Oswald, as well as that of Lucilia. But the two latter were both swayed by the same kind of reserve, and the more they resembled each other in this respect, the more difficult they found it to break the bonds of restraint by which they were fettered.

CHAP. II.

ON his arrival at Florence, Lord Nelville wrote to the Prince Castel-Forte, and a few moments after he was waited upon by that nobleman. Oswald was so much affected on beholding him, that for a long time he was unable to speak ; at length he asked tidings of Corinna. I have nothing to tell you concerning her, but what is sad," answered the Prince: "her health is in a very bad state, and she grows worse every day. She sees nobody; any kind of occupation is painful to her; however I think she has become more

calm since we have learnt your arrival in Italy ; I cannot conceal from you that at this news she felt so keen an emotion that the fever which had left her returned. She has not told me what her intentions are relative to you ; for I carefully avoid mentioning your name.”—“ Have the goodness, Prince,” replied Oswald, “ to shew her the letter you received from me about five years ago : it contains a detail of all the circumstances which prevented my knowing of her voyage to England before I became the spouse of Lucilia, and when she shall have read it, ask her to let me see her ; I wish to speak with her in order, if possible, to justify my conduct. Her esteem is necessary to my happiness, though I can no longer presume to awaken any interest in her bosom.”—“ I shall fulfil your desires my Lord,” said the Prince Castel-Forte : “ I hope that you may restore comfort to her.”—

Lady Nelville entered at this moment. Oswald presented the Prince to her.—She received him with considerable coldness—He beheld her very attentively, and was no doubt struck with her beauty ; for in going out he sighed as he thought of Corinna. Lord Nelville followed him.—“ Lady Nelville is charming,” said the Prince Castel-Forte “ What youth ! What bloom ! My poor friend can no longer boast such dazzling beauty ; but you must not forget my Lord, the brilliancy of Corinna’s charms when you saw her for the first time.”—“ No, I do not forget it,” said Lord Nelville “ I can never forgive myself,”—and he stopped without power to conclude what he was going to say. The remainder of the day he was gloomy and silent. Lucilia did not seek to divert his melancholy, and Lord Nelville was hurt at that very circumstance. He said

to himself if Corinna had beheld me sad, Corinna would have comforted me.

The next morning his disquietude induced him to pay an early visit to the Prince Castel-Forte.—“ Well,” said he to him, “ what answer has she returned ?”—“ She will not see you,” answered the prince.—“ And what are her motives ?”—“ I went to see her yesterday, I found her in a state of agitation which gave me infinite pain. She walked her room with a hurried step, notwithstanding her extreme weakness. Her paleness sometimes gave place to a deep red, which disappeared immediately. I told her that you desired to see her ; she kept silence for some time, and at length spoke these words, which I will relate to you faithfully since you demand it :—*‘ This man has done me too much injury. The enemy who could have thrown me into prison, who could have banished, and proscribed me, would not have torn*

my heart in this manner. I have suffered what woman never suffered before, a mixture of tenderness and irritation, which made my thoughts a continual torment. I felt as much enthusiasm as love for this cruel man. He ought to remember that I told him once it would cost me more to cease to admire than to cease to love him. He has withered the object of my worship, whether voluntarily or involuntarily it matters not—he is not what I thought him. What has he done for me? He has enjoyed, during a year, the passion he inspired me with, and when he ought to have defended me, when he ought to have manifested his heart by some action, What has he done? Can he boast of one sacrifice, one generous procedure? He is happy now, he possesses all the advantages which the world appreciates; but I am sinking into my grave—let him leave me in peace’.”

“ These words are very hard,” said Oswald.—“ She is soured by suffering,” replied the Prince ; “ I have often seen her in a gentler mood, and often, allow me to tell you, she has taken your part against me.”—“ You think me very guilty then ?” replied Lord Nelville.—“ Dare I say,” said the Prince, “ that I think you are ? The wrong we do a woman does not injure us in the eyes of the world : these frail idols, adored to day, may be broken to-morrow, and nobody will trouble their heads about it ; for this reason, I respect women the more ; for morality, as far as regards them, is only defended by our own heart. No inconvenience results to us from injuring them, and nevertheless the injury is dreadful. To plunge a dagger in the breast of another is a crime that the law punishes with death ; and to pierce a sensible heart with cruel neglect, is only

considered a subject for pleasantry; though the stroke of a dagger would be less barbarous." "Believe me," answered Lord Nelville, "I have also been very wretched, that is my only justification; it is what Corinna would formerly have listened to. It may have little weight with her now; nevertheless I will write to her. I still believe that through all the obstacles that separate us, she will hear the voice of her former lover." "I will give her your letter," said the Prince Castel-Forte; "but I conjure you, be cautious in what you say; for you know not how deep a hold you have of her affection still; five years render an impression still more deep, when no other idea diverts the attention from it. Would you know the state of her mind at present? A fantastical idea which all my intreaties could not prevail upon her to renounce, will give you an idea of it."

In finishing these words, the Prince Castel-Forte opened the door of his cabinet, and Lord Nelville followed him. He first saw the portrait of Corinna, such as she appeared in the first act of Romeo and Juliet, upon that day, when of all others, he felt most captivated by her. An air of confidence and felicity animated her countenance. The recollection of that happy time was entirely awakened in the imagination of Lord Nelville, and as he found pleasure in indulging it, the Prince Castel-Forte took him by the hand, and drawing aside a curtain of crape which concealed another picture, he shewed him Corinna such as she had been painted this year, in a black gown, after the costume which she had never quitted since her return from England. Oswald suddenly recollected the impression he had received from a female clad thus, whom he perceived in Hyde-Park; but what particu-

larly struck him was the inconceivable change which had taken place in the countenance of Corinna. She appeared in this picture as pale as death, her eyes half shut, and her long eye-lids veiled her looks, reflecting a shade upon her colourless cheeks. At the bottom of the portrait was written this line from the *Paster Fido* :

“ A pena si può dir: questa fu rosa.”

“ Hardly could we say: she was a rose.”

“ What !” said Lord Nelville, “ is this her present situation ?”—“ Yes,” answered the Prince, “ and for this fortnight past she has been much worse.” At these words, Lord Nelville left the room in a state of phrenzy: the excess of his agony disturbed his reason.

CHAP. III.

ON his return home he shut himself up in his chamber the whole day. Lucilia came at the dinner hour, and tapped gently at his door. He opened it, and said to her, "my dear Lucilia, allow me to remain alone to day; do not be angry with me." Lucilia turned to Julietta, whom she held by the hand, embraced her, and went away without saying a word. Lord Nelville shut the door again, and returned to the table, where lay the letter he was writing to Corinna. But he said to himself with

tears :—" Do I not now make Lucilia suffer? of what service then is my life, if all who love me are to be made wretched on my account?"

Lord Nelville's Letter to Corinna.

" Did I not know you to be the most generous woman in the world, what could I say to you? you may overwhelm me with reproaches, and what is still more dreadful, rend my heart, by relating your own grief. Am I a monster, Corinna, for having done so much injury to her whom I loved? Alas! my own sufferings tell me that my nature is not entirely savage. You know that when I knew you first, I was overwhelmed with a sorrow that pursued me to the grave. I did not hope for happiness. I struggled long with the passion that you inspired me with, and

when at length it triumphed over me, there always remained at the bottom of my soul a sentiment of sadness, the presage of an unhappy fate. At one time I believed you a blessing sent from my father in heaven, who, watchful over my destiny, wished me to be still beloved on earth, as he loved me during his life. At one time I believed that I should prove disobedient to his will in espousing a foreigner, and so departing from the line chalked out for me by the duties of my situation. This last sentiment prevailed, when on my return to England I learnt that my father had condemned beforehand my passion for you. Had he lived, I should have exercised the right of disputing his authority in this respect ; but those who are no more, can no longer listen to our reasonings, and their will, deprived of the power that would enforce it, bears an affecting and sacred character.

“ I found myself again surrounded by the habits and ties of my native country ; I met your sister, whom my father had destined for my bride, and who so well agreed with the idea of a peaceful and regular life. There is in my character a sort of weakness, which makes me dread all that agitates the calm of life. My mind is seduced by new hopes ; but I have experienced so much pain, that my disordered soul fears every thing that exposes us to too violent emotions, to resolutions that may wound my recollections, and the affections born with me. However, Corinna, had I known of your being in England, nothing could ever have detached me from you. This admirable proof of tenderness would have decided my wavering heart. Ah ! why say what I should do ? Should we be happy ? Am I capable of being so ? With my uncertainty of disposi-

tion, could I choose a lot, however happy, without regretting another?

“ When you restored me my liberty, I was indignant at your conduct, I entered into those ideas, which the generality of mankind would form of you. I said to myself that a woman of such superior cast could easily dispense with me. Corinna, I have pierced thine heart, I know it, but I fancied I was only immolating myself; I thought myself more disconsolate than you; I thought that you would forget me, whilst I should ever regret your loss. In effect, I was entangled by circumstances, and I will not deny that Lucilia is more than worthy of the sentiment she inspires me with. But as soon as I learnt your having been in England, my life became a continual torment to me. For four years I sought death in the midst of war, certain that when you heard I was no more, you would forgive me. It is true you can op-

pose me with a life of woe, an unshaken fidelity, for an ungrateful man who did not deserve it. But think that the destiny of man becomes complicated with a thousand different relations, which disturb the constancy of the heart. However, if it be true, that I can neither find happiness myself, nor confer it on others; if it be true that I have been insolated since I left you, that my heart has no communion, that the mother of my child, she who has a claim upon my affections, by so many titles, remains a stranger to my secrets, and to my thoughts; if it be true that an habitual state of melancholy has replunged me into that malady from which your cares had restored me; if I am come to Italy, not to seek the recovery of my health—for you cannot believe I am enamoured of life—but to bid you adieu before I die, will you refuse to see me once? I wish it on your account, and not because of my own sufferings.

Of what consequence is it that I am miserable ! Of what consequence is it that a dreadful weight presses heavily on my heart ; if I leave here without having spoken to you, without having obtained your pardon, I must be unhappy, and certainly I shall be so. But methinks your heart would be comforted, when you could once more think of me as your friend, when you had learnt how dear you were to me, when you had been told it by the look, and by the accent of your Oswald, whose fate is more altered than his heart. I respect my present ties ; I love your sister, but the human heart, strange and inconsistent as it is, can unite such tenderness with feelings like those I entertain for you. I can say nothing for myself in writing—all explanation must be against me. Nevertheless, were you to behold me prostrate before you, spite of all my past offences, and present duties, you would see what you

are to me, and this last interview would leave a soft impression on your mind. Alas ! the health of both of us is very weak, and I do not think that heaven has destined to either of us a long life, let that one who shall precede the other, feel beloved by the friend that is left upon earth. Only the innocent ought to be permitted this enjoyment, but let it also be granted to the guilty !

“ Corinna, sublime woman ! you who can read the human heart, divine all that I cannot express ; know me as you before knew me. Let me see you—permit my pale lips to press your feeble hands—Alas ! it is not me alone who have done this injury—it is the same sentiment that consumes us both—it is destiny that has struck two beings who loved each other ; but it has devoted one to crime, and that one, Corinna, is not perhaps the least to be pitied !”

Corinna's Answer.

“ If my seeing you were only to pardon you, I should not hesitate for a moment. I know not why I do not feel any resentment against you, though I shudder at the grief you have caused me. It must be that I love you still, not to feel any sentiment of aversion. Religion alone could not thus disarm me. There have been moments when my reason has been disturbed, others, and those were the sweetest of all, when from a tightness about my heart, I expected to die before the close of day. There have been moments too when I have doubted the existence of every thing, even that of virtue—you were for me her image here below, and I had no longer any guide for my thoughts or my sentiments, when the same stroke destroyed in me both admiration and love.

Were it not for the assistance of heaven, what would have become of me? Every thing in this world was poisoned by the remembrance of you. One asylum only was left me in my own soul; there God waited to receive me. My physical strength is decreasing; but it is not so with the enthusiasm that supports me. To become worthy of immortality is, I believe, the only aim of existence. Happiness and suffering both assist to this end; and you have been chosen by the Deity to detach me from that earth to which I was bound by too strong a tie.

“ When I learnt your arrival in Italy, when I beheld your writing again, when I knew you were on the other side of the river, I felt my soul in a dreadful tumult. I was obliged to combat my feelings every moment with the idea that my sister was your wife. I will not conceal it from you, to see you again appeared to me a happi-

piness, an emotion not to be defined, which my intoxicated heart preferred to ages of calm ; but Providence has not deserted me in this peril. Are you not the husband of another ? What could I then have to say to you ? Dare I ever expect to die in your arms ? What refuge could I have in my conscience did I make no sacrifice ; did I yet desire another day, another hour ? I can now appear before God with confidence, since I have been able to renounce the pleasure of seeing you. This great resolution will appease my soul. Happiness, such as I have felt when loved by you, is not in harmony with our nature : it agitates, it disturbs, because we think we are about to lose it ; but habitual prayer, religious meditation, which has for its aim the perfection of ourself, the regulation of our conduct, by the sense of duty, is a gentle state, and I know not what ravage, even

the sound of your voice would make in the tranquil existence I have procured myself. You have given me great pain in telling me that your health is impaired. Ah! it is not I who now take care of you; but it is I who suffer with you. May God blèss your days, my Lórd—be happy, but let your felicity consist in piety. A secret communication with the Deity seems to place in ourselves the being who confides, and the object of our confidence; it forms two friends in one soul. Would you still seek what is called happiness? Ah! could you find a greater than my affection? Do you know that in the deserts of the new world, I would have blest my lot, had you permitted me to follow you thither? Do you know that I would have served you as a slave, that I would have prostrated myself before you as before an ambassador of heaven, had you faithfully loved me? Well what have you

done with so much love? To what have you converted this affection which is without parallel in the world? To a misery equally unparalleled. No longer therefore pretend to happiness; do not insult me by hoping to obtain it. Pray like me; pray and let our thoughts meet in heaven.

“ However, when I feel near my end, perhaps I will place myself in some spot to see you pass. Why should I not? Certainly when my eyes fail me, when I can no longer behold any external object, your image will appear to me; and by having recently seen you, this illusion will be more distinct. The deities of old were never present at death; I will remove you from mine; but I wish for a recent impression of your features to be present to my fainting soul. Oswald, Oswald, what have I said? You see what I am

when I abandon myself to the thought of
of you!

“ Why has not Lucilia desired to see
me? She is your wife; but she is also my
sister. I have some sweet, aye, some ge-
nerous expressions to address to her. And
your daughter, why has not she been
brought to me? I ought not to see you,
but those who surround you are of my
own family: am I then rejected by them?
Do they think that poor little Julietta will
grow sad when she sees me? It is true
that I have the appearance of a spectre;
but I could smile upon your child. Adieu,
my Lord, think that I could call you bro-
ther; but it would be because you are
my sister's husband. Ah! you will at
least go in mourning when I am dead, and
attend my funeral as a relation. It is to
Rome that my ashes will be first carried;
let my coffin move in the track of my tri-

umphal car, and stop to rest yourself at the spot where you picked up my crown. But Oswald, I do wrong to afflict you thus, and must forbear, I will only indulge in one tear, and some looks towards that sky where I shall expect you."

CHAP. VII.

SEVERAL days glided away before Oswald could recover his tranquillity, after the impression he received from Corinna's heart-rending epistle. He shunned the presence of Lucilia ; he passed whole hours on the banks of the river which led to Corinna's house, and was often tempted to plunge into the water, that at least when no more, he might be carried to that abode which was shut against him during his life. Corinna's letter expressed a desire to behold her sister, and though asto-

nished at this request, he desired to satisfy it ; but how could he intimate it to Lucilia ? He perceived very clearly that she was wounded by his sadness ; he could have wished her to interrogate him, but could not determine to speak first ; and Lucilia always found means to turn the conversation upon indifferent topics, to propose a walk, or any thing to change the current of a discourse that might lead to an explanation. She sometimes expressed her desire to quit Florence, in order to visit Rome and Naples. Lord Nelville never opposed it, he only asked some days delay, and Lucilia then consented with an expression on her countenance at once dignified and cold.

Oswald wished at least for Corinna to see his daughter ; and he secretly ordered her nurse to take her to her house. He went to meet the child on her return, and

asked if she had been satisfied with her visit. Julietta answered him in an Italian phrase, and her pronunciation which resembled that of Corinna, caused Oswald to thrill with joy.—“Who has taught you that my dear,” said he, “The Lady I have been to see,” answered Julietta; “And how did she receive you?”—“She cried a good deal; but I don’t know what it was for. Her crying seems to hurt her; for she looked very ill.” “And do you like this Lady, my love?” continued Lord Nelville; “Yes, very much indeed,” answered Julietta, “she promised to teach me all she knows. She said that she wished me to resemble Corinna—who is Corinna, father? the Lady did not tell me who she was.” Lord Nelville made no answer, but went away to conceal his feelings. He ordered Julietta to be taken to Corinna every day in the course of her

walk ; perhaps he acted wrong towards Lucilia in thus disposing of her daughter without her knowledge. But in a short time the child made astonishing improvement in every department of learning. Her Italian master was charmed with her pronunciation, and her music-masters already admired her first essays.

Nothing of all that had passed, gave Lucilia so much pain as this influence over the education of her daughter, which had been allowed to Corinna. She learnt from Julietta, that her poor sister, who was in a dreadful state of feebleness and decay, took extreme pains to instruct the child, and communicate to her her talents as a legacy to her living image. Lucilia would have been touched with all this attention, did she not conceive it to originate in a desire to take Lord Nelville from her ; but she felt a conflict between the natural desire of presiding entirely

over the education of her daughter and the reproach it would be to her to deprive the child of those lessons which added to her attractions in so remarkable a manner. One day Lord Nelville passed through the room when Julietta was taking her lesson of music. She held a harp in the form of a lyre, in the same manner as Corinna; and her little arms, and pretty looks, perfectly resembled her. It was like a fine picture in miniature, to which was superadded, the grace of infancy, which gave an innocent charm to the whole. At this sight Oswald was unable to speak from his emotion, and he sat down trembling in every limb. Julietta then executed on her harp a Scotch air, that Corinna had played to Lord Nelville at Tivoli, in presence of a picture from Ossian. Whilst Oswald could scarcely breathe from attention, Lucilia came behind him. When Julietta had done, her father took her

upon his knees and said,—“The Lady who lives on the banks of the Arno, has taught you to play in this manner;” “Yes,” answered Julietta, “but it was a hard task: for she was often taken ill whilst she was teaching me. I asked her to leave off; but she would not; only she made me promise to sing this air to you every year, on a certain day, the seventeenth of November, I think it was.”—“Oh heavens!” cried Lord Nelville, and he embraced the child bursting into tears.

Lucilia then shewed herself, and taking Julietta by the hand, she said to her husband in English: “It is too much, my Lord, thus to seek to deprive me of my daughter’s affection too; this consolation ought to have been allowed me in my affliction.”—In finishing these words, she took Julietta by the hand, and went out of the room, Nelville wished in vain

to follow her, she would not permit him, and at dinner he was informed, that she had been out alone for several hours, and had not left word where she was gone.—He began to be very uneasy at her absence, when he saw her return with an expression of gentleness, and calm on her countenance, quite different from what he expected. At length he determined to open his mind to her, and endeavour to obtain her pardon by sincerity; but she said to him, “Suffer, my Lord, this explanation, so necessary to both of us, to be retarded yet awhile; you shall very shortly know my motives for this request.”

During dinner, she made the conversation much more interesting than usual; several days passed away, in which Lucilia constantly appeared more agreeable and more animated than ordinary, but Lord Nelville could not conceive the

meaning of this change. The following was the cause. Lucilia had been very much hurt at the visits of her daughter to Corinna, and the interest which Lord Neville seemed to take in the lessons she received from her. All that she had so long nursed in her mind escaped her at this moment, and as it happens with persons who depart from their natural character, she suddenly adopted a hasty resolution, and set out to see Corinna, and ask whether she was determined to persevere thus in weaning her husband's affections from her. She felt bold in this determination till she reached Corinna's door, when she was seized with such a sentiment of timidity that she never could have summoned courage to enter, had not Corinna, who perceived her through the window, sent Theresa to intreat her to come in. Lucilia went up stairs to Corinna's apartment, when on beholding her, every sentiment of

anger vanished from her mind ; she felt, on the contrary, deeply affected by the deplorable state of her sister's health, and it was in tears that she embraced her. Then began an interview between the two sisters full of frankness on both sides. Corinna gave the first example of this frankness ; but it would have been impossible for Lucilia not to have followed it. Corinna exercised over her sister that ascendancy which her character gave her over every body. It was impossible with her to feel either dissimulation or restraint. Corinna did not conceal from Lucilia, that to her own belief she had not long to live, and her pale countenance and feeble state proved it too well. She conversed familiarly with her sister on the most delicate subjects ; she spoke of her happiness, and that of Oswald. She knew from what the Prince Castel-Forte had told her, and still better from her own surmises of the cold

ness and restraint that existed between them ; and then exercising that influence which her superior mind and approaching end gave her, she generously set about the task of rendering Lucilia more happy with her husband. Knowing perfectly the character of the latter, she made Lucilia comprehend why he sought in the woman he loved, a disposition of mind in many respects different from his own ; a spontaneous confidence, because his own natural reserve prevented his soliciting it, more animation because he was susceptible of depression and gaiety, precisely because his own melancholy was painful to him. Corinna painted herself as she had been in the brilliant days of her life ; she judged her own character as she would have judged that of a stranger, and demonstrated plainly to Lucilia how agreeable a woman must be to him, who to the most rigid morality, and the most regular conduct should

unite freedom of manners, and all the charms that proceed from a desire to please.

“Women have been seen,” said Corinna to Lucilia, “who have been beloved, not only in spite of their errors, but because of those errors themselves. The reason of this seeming inconsistency is, that these women endeavoured to appear more amiable in order to obtain their pardon; and imposed no restriction, because they themselves stood in need of indulgence. Do not therefore, Lucilia, be proud of your perfection; let your chief attraction consist in forgetting it, and not picquing yourself upon its merit. You must be at once yourself and me, you must not let your virtues ever authorise you to neglect, in the slightest degree, the means of captivating your husband, nor ever make these virtues a plea for pride or coldness. If this pride were not well-founded, it would

perhaps wound less, for to insist upon our rights freezes the heart more than unjust pretensions ; love is particularly pleased to give what is not due.

Lucilia thanked her sister tenderly for the kindness she shewed her, and Corinna said :—“ Were I to live, I could not be capable of this, but as I know I am shortly to die, my only remaining desire is, that Oswald may find in you, and in his daughter some traces of my influence, and that he may never know the enjoyment of affection, without bestowing a thought on Corinna.”—Lucilia went every day to see her sister, and studied with a very amiable modesty and a delicacy of sentiment, more amiable still, to resemble her whom Oswald most loved. The curiosity of Neville encreased every day in beholding the new graces of Lucilia. He soon conjectured that she had seen Corinna, but could not obtain from her any avowal on the

subject. Corinna, from her first interview with Lucilia, had enjoined secrecy, as to their meetings. She proposed to behold Oswald once more, united to Lucilia, but not till she thought herself within a few moments of her dissolution. She wished to explain all at once, and she enveloped this project in such mystery, that Lucilia herself knew not in what manner she meant to accomplish it.

CHAP. V.

CORINNA believing herself seized with a mortal malady, wished to bid Italy, and especially Oswald, a final adieu, which might recal the time when her genius shone in all its splendor. It was a weakness that must be pardoned in her. Love and glory were blended in her mind, even to the moment when her heart made the sacrifice of all its earthly attachments, she desired that the ungrateful man, who had abandoned her, might feel, once more, that it was to the woman who of all

others knew best how to love and to think, that he had given death. Corinna had no longer strength sufficient for an extempore effusion; but she composed some verses, and chose a day to assemble in one of the halls of the Florence Academy all those who were desirous of hearing her; she imparted her design to Lucilia, and besought her to bring her husband thither.—“I can ask it of you now,” said she, “in my present condition.”

Oswald was terribly afflicted when he learnt the resolution of Corinna. Would she read her verses herself?—Of what subject would she treat? In fact, the possibility of seeing her was sufficient to overturn his whole soul. On the morning of the appointed day, winter which is rarely felt in Italy, appeared there for a moment as in the climates of the north; a dreadful wind was heard to whistle through the houses; the rain beat violently against the

panes of the windows, and by a singularity, of which there are however more examples in Italy than any where else, thunder was heard in the midst of January, and mingled a sentiment of terror and sadness with the gloomy impression of the weather. Oswald did not speak a word ; but all his external sensations seemed to augment the shivering of his soul.

He arrived with Lucilia in the hall, where an immense crowd were collected together. At one end, in a very obscure situation, was placed an arm chair, and Lord Nelville heard it said by those about him that it was for Corinna, because she was too ill to recite her verses herself. Fearing to shew herself, so much was she altered, she chose this means of seeing Oswald, without being seen herself. As soon as she knew he was come, she veiled herself and proceeded towards the arm chair. She was obliged to be supported ;

she advanced with tottering limbs, and stopped, from time to time, to take breath; for this short space was to her a painful journey. Thus the last steps of life are always slow and difficult. As soon as she was seated, she sought Oswald with her eyes, and on perceiving him, she rose up by an involuntary motion, and stretched her arms towards him; but immediately sinking into her chair, she turned her head with an averted look, like Dido when she meets Eneas in a world where human passions could not penetrate. The Prince Castel-Forte restrained Lord Nelville who, quite beside himself, wished to go and fall at her feet; but contained himself out of respect for Corinna before this numerous assembly.

A young girl, clad in white and crowned with flowers, appeared in a kind of amphitheatre which had been prepared for her. It was she who was to sing the verses of Corinna. There was an affecting contrast

between this countenance so tranquil and so gentle ; this countenance where the miseries of life had yet left no trace, and the words she was about to utter. But even this contrast was pleasing to Corinna. It gave a kind of serenity to the too gloomy thoughts of her dejected soul. A music, calculated to inspire the noblest sensibility, prepared the audience for the impressions they were about to receive. The wretched Oswald could not turn his looks from Corinna, from that shadow which appeared to him like the phantom of a disordered mind, and he was almost choaked with sighs in listening to the last strains of the dying swan, which the woman he had so cruelly injured addressed to him from the bottom of her heart.

The last song of Corinna.

“ Receive my solemn greeting, O my fellow citizens! Already the clouds of darkness rise to my sight; but are not the Heavens most beautiful during the night season? They are then decorated with myriads of stars; but by day the fields of Ether appear desert. Thus the shadows of death reveal to our sight innumerable thoughts, which the sun of prosperity had rendered imperceptible. But the voice which could publish those thoughts grows feeble by degrees; the soul retires within itself, and endeavours to collect its last heat.

“ From the first days of my youth, I promised to honour that Roman name which still vibrates on the chords of my heart. You have allowed my claim to the palm of glory, O generous nation, who do not exclude women from its temple, you who

do not sacrifice immortal talents to fleeting jealousy ; you who ever applaud the flights of genius ; that conqueror without conquered, that victor without spoil which draws from eternity to enrich time.

“ With what confidence did nature and life once inspire me ! I believed that every unhappiness came from not possessing sufficient thought and feeling ; and that it was possible on earth to have a foretaste of celestial felicity which is only permanence of enthusiasm and constancy in love.

“ No, I do not repent this generous exaltation—it is not that which causes me to shed those tears that water the dust which is to receive me. I should have fulfilled the object of my destiny, I should have been worthy of the benefits of Heaven, had I consecrated my sounding lyre to celebrate the divine bounty manifested in the universe.

“ Thou wilt not reject, O God ! the tribute of genius, the homage of poetry is

religious, and the wings of thought lift the soul to thee !

“ There is nothing narrow, nothing base, nothing confined in religion. It is immense, infinite, eternal, and so far from genius turning the mind from it, imagination, from its first flight passes the boundaries of human life, and the sublime of every kind is only a reflection of the Deity.

“ Ah ! had I loved none but him, had I placed my head in Heaven, sheltered from the storm of human affections, I should not have been untimely blasted ; phantoms would not have taken the place of my brilliant chimeras. Unhappy me ! my genius if it still subsist is only felt by the force of my grief ; it is under the features of a hostile power that it is known.

“ Adieu then my country ! Adieu the land from which I received my birth ! recollections of my childhood, adieu ! What have ye to do with death ? You who in

my writings have found sentiments correspondent to your own souls, O my friends, wherever you are, adieu! It is not in an unworthy cause that Corinna has suffered, she has not forfeited her claim to your pity.

“ Lovely Italy! in vain did you open to me your charms, what could you do for a heart forsaken? Would you awaken my recollections, to augment my pain? Would you recal the image of happiness to make me indignant at my fate?

“ I submit with mildness to its decrees. O you who will survive me, when the spring shall return remember how I loved its beauties, how I praised its air and its perfumes! Sometimes call to mind my versés which bear the stamp of my soul; but think that fatal muses—Love and misfortune have inspired my last strains.

“ When the designs of Providence respecting us are accomplished, an internal

music prepares us for the arrival of the angel of death. There is nothing fearful, nothing terrible in this celestial messenger—his wings are white ; but he walks enveloped in night, yet a thousand presages announce his arrival.

“ Does the wind murmur, we fancy we hear his voice. At the close of day, the shadows which cover the fields, appear like the foldings of his flowing robe. At noon, when the living and the healthy see nothing but a pure sky, feel nothing but a brilliant sun, she whom the angel of death reclaims, perceives at a distance a cloud which is soon to veil all nature from her eyes.

“ Youthful hopes, young emotions, I take my leave of you for ever. Far from me be every deceitful regret ; if some tears are yet allowed me, if I believe myself yet beloved, it is because I am about to disappear, but were I to seize upon life, it would turn against me all its daggers.

“ And you, O Rome! where my ashes will be transported, pardon me you who have beheld so many die, if with a trembling step, I join your illustrious dead; pardon me, if I pity my own lot. Sentiments and thoughts, perhaps noble, perhaps fertile, are extinguished with me, and of all the faculties of the soul, for which I am indebted to nature, that of suffering is the only one of which I have the full exercise.

“ No matter, I must obey. The great mystery of death whatever it maybe, brings tranquillity with it. You are my security, ye silent tombs; thou art my security bountiful Deity. I had made my choice on earth, and my heart has no longer any asylum. You will decide for me, and my lot will be the better for it.”

Thus finished the last song of Corinna.

The hall resounded with a deep and melancholy murmur of applause, and Lord Neville, unable to support the violence of his emotion, fell senseless on the ground. Corinna seeing him in this situation, wished to go to him, but her strength failed her the moment she attempted to rise; she was conducted home, and from that moment, there was no hope of her life.

She sent for a venerable priest, in whom she placed great confidence, and conversed a long time with him. Lucilia repaired to her, and so moved was she by the grief of Oswald, that she threw herself at her sister's feet to conjure her to receive him; but Corinna refused, though free from any feeling of resentment—"I pardon him," said she "for having torn my heart; men do not know the evil they do, and society persuades them that it is merely pastime to fill a heart with love and then abandon

it to despair. But in this my dying moment God has given me the grace to recover my tranquillity, and I feel that the sight of Oswald would fill my soul with sentiments which do not accord with the agonies of death—religion alone claims this awful hour. I pardon him whom I so much loved,” continued she, with a feeble voice, “may he live happy with you. But when the time shall come that he too must quit this earthly scene, let him then think of poor Corinna. She will watch over him if God permit; for we do not cease to love, when our affection has cost us our life.”

Oswald was at the threshold of the door, sometimes about to enter in spite of the positive prohibition of Corinna, and at other times quite absorbed in woe. Lucilia went from one to the other, the mediating angel between despair and agony.

One evening it was thought that Corinna was better, and Lucilia obtained Oswald's consent to go with her to their daughter, whom they had not seen for three days. Corinna during this interval found herself worse, and fulfilled all the duties of religion. We are assured that she said to the old ecclesiastic who received her last confession :—" Father, you now know my sad destiny, pronounce judgment on me. I never sought revenge for an injury done me ; never was I insensible to the sufferings of others ; my faults are those of the passions, which would not be culpable in themselves if human weakness and human pride had not blended error with excess. Do you believe, O my father, you who have experienced more of life than me, do you believe that God will pardon me ?"—" Yes daughter," said the old man, " is your heart now entirely his ?"—" I believe so father," answered she,

“take from me this portrait (it was that of Oswald), and place at my heart the image of him who descended upon earth, not to the aid of power and genius, but to that of suffering and death, which most needed his succour. Corinna then perceived the Prince Castel-Forte, who was weeping by her bed side.—“My friend,” said she, stretching her hand to him “you are all that I find near me now. I lived for love, and were it not for you, I should die alone.”—Her tears flowed as she uttered these words, then she added.—“However the moment is now arrived when I can dispense with assistance, our friends can only follow us to the threshold of life. There begin thoughts whose depth cannot be imparted.”

She caused herself to be carried in an arm chair to the window, that she might once more behold the sky. Lucilia then

returned, and the wretched Oswald, unable to contain himself any longer, followed her, and fell on his knees before Corinna. She wished to speak to him, but had not the strength. She lifted her eyes to Heaven, and saw the moon which was covered with the same cloud she had made Lord Nelville notice when they stopped on the sea shore on their way to Naples.—She pointed to it with her dying hand; and her last sigh caused this hand to drop.

What became of Oswald? Such was his distraction that fears were entertained at first for his reason, and for his life. He followed the funeral procession of Corinna to Rome. He shut himself up a long time at Tivoli, whither he would not permit either his wife or his daughter to accompany him. At length attachment and duty recalled him to them, and they returned

to England together. Lord Nelville gave an example of domestic life, the most regular and most pure. But did he pardon himself for his past conduct? Did he derive consolation from the world who approved of it? Was he satisfied with a common lot, after what he had lost? All this I know not, nor will I in this respect either blame or acquit him.

FINIS.

N O T E S
TO THE FIFTH VOLUME.

PAGE 28, line 3.

Talma having passed several years of his life in London, his admirable genius has combined the character and beauties of the dramatic art in both countries.

Page 108, line 21.

After the death of Dante, the Florentines, ashamed of having permitted him to die at a distance from his natural home, sent a deputation to the Pope, to beseech him to let them have his remains, which were buried at Ravenna; but the Pope refused, thinking, justly, that the country which had afforded the exile an asylum, was to him his native land; therefore he would not give up the honor of possessing his tomb.

Page 109, line 6.

Alfieri said, that it was walking in the church of

Santa Croce, that he felt for the first time the love of glory, and it is there that he was buried. The epitaph which he composed for his respectable friend, the Countess of Albany, and for himself, contains the most moving and simple expressions of a long and perfect friendship.

Page 24, line 20.

It having been announed at Bologna, that an eclipse of the sun would take place at two o'clock in the day, the people collected in the market-place to behold it, and impatient at its delay, called for it with petulance, as they would for an actor who made them wait. At length it began; but the cloudy weather preventing it from producing a grand effect, they began to hiss with great tumult, not finding the shew equal to their expectation.

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